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Cats of Birchclan:

Leader:
Ashstar- grey she-cat with yellow eyes
Deputy:
Coontail-white tom with grey tabby spots along his back
Medicine cat:
Blacktip-white she-cat with black-brown legs, face, dorsal stripe, and tail
Warriors:
DarkMoss-dusty brown she-cat with black paws and tail tip
Firelight-bright orange tabby tom with a white mark on his chin
Silverpatch-white she-cat with light grey spots and bright blue eyes
Sageheart-brown she-cat with darker brown on her muzzle, tail and paws and she has blue-green eyes
Blazefire-orange tabby tom with yellow-gold eyes
Apprentice-Sootpaw
Aquaspear-a blueish-grey she-cat with darker legs, tail and back and a white spot on her chest
Stormclaw-Black she-cat with a white chest and paws and amber eyes
Harefoot-light brown tom with a white belly, paws, and chin, dark brown eyes
Lillytail-light orange she-cat with a white chest and brown eyes
Thistlepelt-black and white tom with grey eyes
Adderclaw-reddish brown tom with dark brown eyes
Crystalpelt-white she-cat with light grey paws
Apprentice-Cinderpaw
Emberstream-brown tabby she-cat
Robinwing-Black tom with a brown chest and brown eyes
Cherrynose-reddish brown she-cat with greenish brown eyes
Shrubberry-light brown tom with white on his belly and paws
Windburrow-dark grey She-cat
Sorrelleaf-calico she-cat with an amber eye and a green eye
Willowbreeze-white she-cat with large light grey patches on her back
Tuffwhisker-Black tom with white on his muzzle

Oakbranch-dark brown tabby tom with a light brown belly and paws
Pineclaw-light brown tabby tom with dark brown spots
Apprentice-Flowerpaw
Skywhisker-light grey she-cat
Moonleaf-blueish-grey she-cat
Ottertail-sleek brown tom with black paws and bright gold eyes
Barkpelt-white tom with streaks of black
Apprentice-Dawnpaw
Sundapple-light orange tabby she-cat
Echobreeze-dark grey She-cat with a large white spot on her belly and paws
Wispertail-light grey She-cat
Apprentice-Creekpaw
Heatherlight-light brown tabby tom
Rootclaw-brown and black tom
Goldenshade-yellow tabby she-cat
Maplewisker-calico she-cat
Branchwalker-Black and white tom
Watershine-grey tabby she-cat
Owlclaw-tanish brown she-cat with a white face and paws
Apprentice-Vinepaw
Dewpelt-tan tabby tom
Nettleshine-light grey she-cat with darker grey paws and muzzle
Reedtail-brown tabby tom
Brambletail-Black she-cat with brown and white spots and dark brown eyes
Queens:
Mistyheart-light grey She-cat
(Quailkit-dark tabby tom, Snowkit-grey tabby she-kit with white paws and chest; Oakbranch is her mate)
Sapwhisker-calico she-cat
(Lillykit-calico she-kit with a blue eye and a green eye; shrubberry is her mate)
Finchwing-pale orange she-cat with patches of black
(Reedtail is her mate)
Apprentices:
Flowerpaw-white she-cat with bright blue eyes
Leafpaw-orange tabby tom
Cinderpaw-grey she-cat with a white muzzle

Vinepaw-pale yellow tabby tom
Creekpaw-light grey and white she-cat with grey eyes
Dawnpaw-reddish brown she-cat
Sootpaw-white she-cat with a grey spot on her nose and dark blue eyes
Elders:
Embertail-brown tabby she-cat
Smokefoot-spotted grey tom with black paws and tail
Shadebreeze-dark brown she-cat

Before we get started:

Author's notes will be in the comments as well will be an updated 'Cats of BirchClan.' If you find a name in this book that you would like for an OC or for your own clan, please ask me in the comments. Names that will not be given away are Firelight, Ashstar, Blacktip, Sageheart, Coontail, Blazefire, Sootpaw (and her Warrior name), Brambletail, Silverpatch, DarkMoss, Aquaspear and Whitekit (And his warrior name, although it is a common name) And if you have any questions, suggestions or any thing that will make my book better and more like a traditional book, let me know in the comments.

I would also like to say thanks to Aquaspear (Creamy_Marshmello), Silverpatch (hgfdso), Blazefire, Sootpaw(user30566311), Brambletail and Whitekit for letting me have them in my book, and torcher them when ever it's needed.

Chapter One

DarkMoss padded through the clearing. Adderclaw, Brambletail, Sorrelleaf, And Shrubberry all were with her, the brown tom, Adderclaw was in charge of the border patrol. The five cats went out of camp, and turned sharply to one side to get to the ravine. It was early dawn, dew wiped itself on the cats, soaking their fur before they got out of the forest. BirchClan sent a border patrol once a day, from dawn til about dust. The territory was so big that new apprentices couldn't make the trip. DarkMoss shook out her pelt when the patrol came to the ravine, all of their pelts were slick to their lightly shivering bodies.

Small mummers rippled through the wet cats as they walked by the ravine. DarkMoss peered down the cliff, where the light drizzle was lost in darkness. She strained to see the bottom where a river collected the rain and taking it to somewhere the clan didn't know. "DarkMoss, come on." Adderclaw's mew was light, but a little bit stern. The rest of the patrol stopped as he spoke. DarkMoss hadn't realized she was day dreaming. She laid her ears back as heat flooded them, she quickly caught up to them. It was a little bit before they had to start marking. Eventually they made it to the one spot where they needed to mark; the twoleg bridge. The bridge was the only spot for anything to cross for countless tree-lengths. The dusty brown she-cat smelled the border, only rouge scent tainted her tongue. They marked the one spot before heading a few fox-lengths before turning away from the ravine.

It was sun-high before the border patrol made it to Great Oak. The large tree covered most of of this side of the territory. It's large, wide spread branches reached far and the leaves were nearly as large as cats. The base of the tree was as wide as the BirchClan camp. DarkMoss caught a faint scent, but she was unable to identify it. Opening her mouth, she knew exactly what it was. Fox.

"Adderclaw, I smell fox over here." DarkMoss called out. "It's fresh too."

"I thought I smelled fox. Can you and Brambletail track it, meet us back at camp before dusk if you can." He replied, sniffing the air himself. DarkMoss and Brambletail nodded. The two cats took off, their mouths slightly open to keep track of the fox's path. Their ears where pricked for any sounds of the fox. Bushes and thorny vines slowly took over the dense forest. Smaller trees that where closer than in clan territory. The further the cats got away from the territory, the harder it was for them to walk. They followed the fox's sent under brambles, around thorns and over fallen logs.
"Why can't foxes just listen to our boundaries?" DarkMoss started. "We could do so much more hunting."
"They're mouse-brains, or would that be fox-brained?" Brambletail questioned herself.
"They're just fox-hearts. But anyway, it can't be that far ahead of us, the trail is still fresh. But it feels like we've been tracking this stupid thing for moons."

"Now how can a fox climb a tree?" Brambletail said, looking around. The trail from the fox had disappeared.
"I don't know. I thought they could, but I could be wrong. Let's hunt for a moment, so we can get something to eat, and the trail might be a bit easier to tell where it leads to." DarkMoss stated, giving a final sniff, before sitting down.
"Sounds good, and I'm starving. Where do you want to hunt?" Brambletail started, "I'm hunting over there." She pointed her tail tip to a small clearing, surrounded by berry bushes and plenty of cover and sents of mice.
"Have fun with the berries, and I'll hunt over here. Meet up here when you catch something." DarkMoss joked, she padded off under some brambles before her friend could respond.

DarkMoss screwed up her eyes when she ducked under a thorn bush. Thorns tugged at her face and pelt, ripping small bits of fur that got snagged. She finally got out of the treacherous bush. A large oak tree, not quite as big as great oak made a small clearing. It's large roots weaved in and out of the ground. DarkMoss creeped up to a root, ducking behind it to hide her brown fur.

She waited a few moments before a small shrew came out. It looked around for food but was unaware of the cat that was a tail-length

away. DarkMoss moved into a crouch, She wriggled her haunches before landing on her prey. She reached down and gave a quick snap to it's neck. She picked it up warm blood started to trickle into her mouth, her mouth started to water a bit. Picking up her prey, DarkMoss padded under the thorn bush again. Within a few more steps she was in the same spot as before. She laid down and began to eat her prey. Before long, it was gone. DarkMoss licked her chops, even though it was small, it diminished her hunger. The dusty brown she-cat sat up, wrapping her tail around her paws. Movement in the bushes next to her caught her attention. Before long Brambletail pulled herself from the bush.

With a slight smirk, DarkMoss commented, "Was berry hunting any good?" Brambletail gave a slight glare before shaking her pelt out. "Not funny, but I did catch a mouse." She looked around for a second before continuing, "Did your root hunting go well?"
"Yes, I caught a a vole. Any sign of the fox yet?"
"No, I thought I heard something but it was just a deer." Brambletail said between bites.
"Looks like it's going to rain here soon. I bet the fox went to whatever it calls home. Do you think we should head back?"
"Maybe when it gets dark. We still have a chance on finding it." Brambletail gave a quick glance at the darkening sky.
"Alright," DarkMoss started, pulling herself onto her paws. "Let get on that way, I think we should stick together this time."

Brambletail sniffed the ground while DarkMoss held her mouth slightly open to catch any sign of the fox. The headed parallel with the border, heading along side the lake. Brambletail paused, she opened her mouth a bit more, sniffing the air and the ground. DarkMoss did the same. Faint prey trails touched her tongue but the smell of a fox trail hit her mouth. The trail slowly getting stronger. The two cats had only went a couple of fox-lengths before the trail nearly doubled the strength.
"How did that happen? Could a fox just make it's sent double like that?" Brambletail questioned. She didn't stop her pace continuing to follow the trail.
"Maybe there was two of them, but I always thought that foxes preferred to be alone. But I could always be wrong." DarkMoss replied.

Pine trees started to take over. The dense undergrowth slowly weaved it's self to nothing, leaving a pine needle covered ground. The fox's trail weaved through the trees, only stoping to nibble on a berry bush. The trail slowly lead into a turn. Before long the foxes lead DarkMoss and Brambletail beside their old trail.
"Looks like the Fox knows that we're here. And we must not be too far behind it." DarkMoss started. She shook out her pelt. The sky was becoming dark with rain, and night wasn't too far off.
"I don't know how much longer we can track this guy, I'm tired." Brambletail complained.
"If it turns away from the territory again, we'll just head back. I'm tired as well." DarkMoss gave a long yawn. They walked beside the lake once again. They were only a tree-length away from the border, and getting closer every stride.
"We still haven't seen the fox yet." DarkMoss reported.
"But we don't know how far ahead it is either." Brambletail added.
DarkMoss gave a quick sniff, making sure that they were following the fox still. The sent drifted to a side then disappeared.
"What the?" She replied to the disappearance.
"What," Brambletail started, she sniffed the trail and realized what had happened. "How?"
"Did it role in some-," DarkMoss stoped. A twig had snapped behind her. She lashed around. A large red fox faced her, a smaller grey fox stood behind it. With a yowl, she lunged herself at the red fox.

Chapter Two

DarkMoss lunged, aiming at his throat. Her mouth felt his fur and clamped her jaws as her claws scratched any fur it could find. Her mouth filled with blood, nearly gagging her, but DarkMoss only fought harder. She got a glance at Brambletail lunge at the grey fox. The fox fighting DarkMoss grabbed her tail, and jerked his head to the side, ripping DarkMoss of her grip. She hit the ground before rolling to a stop. She quickly got up, just as pain seared her neck. DarkMoss was striped from the ground, and shaken. She tried to get lose. She lashed a paw behind her, hoping to hit the fox's eye.

Her claws met his face, he let out a squall. DarkMoss fell to the ground, thankfully landing on her feet. Dazed, she wiped around. Rearing up on her back legs she clawed the fox's face. The fox avoided a blow, a white flash attacked at the fox's reach. It whipped his head around, trying to reach the white figure, but failed to do so. DarkMoss lunged, landing on his face. She lashed her claws, hitting his eye and muzzle. She glanced at the white attacker, she had a dark grey patch on her nose. *Sootpaw!* This wasn't a good practice for apprentices. The fox jerked his head, nearly sending DarkMoss flying. She kept her grip.

DarkMoss let go of her grip. She dropped to the ground. She sent a quick glance at where Brambletail was fighting, Blazefire, Sootpaw's mentor, had joined her. The fox had became distracted with Sootpaw. DarkMoss crept under his head, and lunged up grabbing his throat. The red fox started to run off, DarkMoss and Sootpaw dropped off. Pain struck DarkMoss' shoulder.
"Let's go help Blazefire and Brambletail." Sootpaw said, running over to help the cats battle the grey fox. DarkMoss followed Sootpaw. When she got closer, DarkMoss went into a run. She took one last stride before leaping on the fox's back. DarkMoss let her claws drag across the fox's face. The fox whipped her head around, trying to get at DarkMoss.

DarkMoss moved behind the fox's neck. She reached around her

neck clawing at her throat. She could see Blazefire's orange pelt lashing at the fox's side. Sootpaw bit at the fox's black paws. Brambletail clawed at her face and neck. DarkMoss heard the other fox bark. The grey fox stopped fighting, and ran off. DarkMoss lost her balance and fell off. She slipped on the dew covered moss, landing on her side.
"Is everyone ok?" Sootpaw questioned.
"Yeah, I'm fine." Blazefire replied.
"Same, just a nasty bite on my leg." Brambletail added. DarkMoss has dragged herself to her paws and shook out her pelt. A bolt of pain went through her shoulder again.
"I'm fine, I think I wretched my shoulder though." DarkMoss held up her leg a bit, not letting any weight on it.
"It's a long walk back, we better get heading so we're back before moon-high." Sootpaw said. DarkMoss gave a quick check over her, thankfully she didn't have any bad wounds on her. The four cats half walked and half limped back to the camp.

DarkMoss let out a silent sigh of relief. The sent of the border markers touched her nose and familiar smells welcomed her. The sun had already set and bright stars shone above. *What's Silverpatch doing, I haven't seen her all day.* DarkMoss kept her sight to the ground. Making sure she has a place to walk and wasn't going to trip. Pain griped her shoulder every time it touched the ground.

Sootpaw, Blazefire and Brambletail Weaseled their way into camp. DarkMoss hesitated for a moment. *I really don't want to be bombarded with questions and be stared at by everyone.* DarkMoss sighed, she pushed herself through the entrance. Many of the cats where gathered around the three that went in before herself.

"DarkMoss?" She heard a cat meow loudly. A flash darted out of the crowded cats. She stopped right in front of DarkMoss. "DarkMoss your okay!" It was Silverpatch. Her blue eyes where filled with joy yet a hint of fear still tainted them.
"Yep, only a wretched shoulder really." DarkMoss replied.
"Let's get you to Blacktip, she'll know what to do." DarkMoss nodded and limped after her friend.

They reached the den. The sent of herbs tainted her smell. A fluffy black and white cat came out. Her blue eyes wide.

"Hi DarkMoss and Silverpatch." She started in an exciting way.
"DarkMoss what happened!" She just realized that DarkMoss' dusty brown fur was matted by blood. Her black paws where slick with blood, fur and dirt.

"Okay, Silverpatch help DarkMoss clean her wounds, I'll make a poultice for her shoulder." Blacktip walked into her den, disappearing into the shadows. Silver started to lick her wounds. Many times they stung, causing DarkMoss to wince. Blacktip reappeared into the faint moon light.
"Here is a poppy seed to help you sleep. And a poultice for you shoulder." DarkMoss ate the poppy seeds. A cold slimy touched pushed down her fur. "You'll need to stay off your feet for a few days, you should be fine and battle ready in a little under than half a moon. But try to avoid getting into any battles for a while."
"Buts that's such a long time. When will I be able to hunt at lest?"
"In a week or so. Just depends on how quick you heal."
"Let's go to bed Silverpatch, thank you Blacktip." Blacktip nodded.

Silverpatch And DarkMoss walked to the honey suckle den. It's fragrant sent masked the sent of the camp. It was past moon-high. DarkMoss curled up into her nest, leaving her bad shoulder facing up, and putting it in a comfortable position. Silverpatch got into her nest, which was the closes nest near DarkMoss'.
"What did you do today?" DarkMoss whispered to Silverpatch, careful not to wake any cat up.
"I hunted for a bit before returning to camp. Since then, I haven't really done much." She replied.
"Good night Silverpatch." DarkMoss said after a few moments of silence.
"G'night DarkMoss." She heard a light snore next to her. The entrance shuffled lightly. Blazefire and Brambletail came in, the smell of cobwebs drifted next to DarkMoss. She pretended to be asleep, she didn't feel like talking any more.

Chapter Three

Fog surrounded DarkMoss. She looked around, dark trees loomed above her head. The only light was faint, only surrounding DarkMoss.
"Hello?" DarkMoss' voice echoed. She dropped her tail, worry clouded over her thoughts. "Is anyone their?" She mewed louder. She looked around. *This place looks so familiar, I just can't think of where it is.*

Darkmoss looked around, walking only to the edge of faint light. She noticed that around the clearing, only the tree line had shrubs and bushes.
"Hello?" DarkMoss called again. She looked up, wondering where the odd lighting came from. A thick, leafy canopy covered the sky. DarkMoss heard a rustle somewhere in the clearing. DarkMoss felt her heart began to race. She whipped around, holding her tail under her. She darted to the center, continuously turning to see who was their.
"Who's there!" DarkMoss called. She looked in front of herself. A grey blur caught the corner of her eye. She whipped her head around. Nothing was there.

"Who's there! Show your self!" DarkMoss called out again. She kept seeing gray blurs in the corner of her eye. She looked behind herself, two shiny blue objects where in the shadows of a bush. She looked at them, straining to see what they were. For a spilt second they disappeared, reappeared again. She quickly realized what they where. Two bright blue eyes, starring at her.

DarkMoss took off in the opposite direction. She pushed through the bushes. They whipped and clawed at her face. She finally emerged from the shrubs. Blackness swallowed her, it took a moment before her eyes adjusted to the darkness. She swerved between the trees trying to lose whoever was starring at her a moment ago.
"DarkMoss get up." An odd voice told her.
"DarkMoss!" It said louder. Anything that DarkMoss could see

slowly faded away.

DarkMoss woke up. She held her front end up, but her shoulder disagreed. She fell back down into her nest. She looked around, she calmed down when she realized that it was the warriors den.
"DarkMoss, you were fidgeting in your sleep. And talking here and there." Silverpatch said. "How's your shoulder?"
"Well, I just flared it up but better I guess." She replied. DarkMoss lifted herself to her feet, only using her bad shoulder as balance when she shook out her pelt. She limped after Silverpatch to the fresh kill pile. Silverpatch's white and grey fur glowed in the morning sun. When they got to the fresh kill pile, DarkMoss picked a mouse and Silverpatch picked a thrush.

"What was it like outside of the territory that far?" Silverpatch took a bit of her thrush.
"It changed from thick, dense shrubs and small trees to pine trees. And some bits where just like our territory." DarkMoss told her. She took a bite of her mouse. "Have you seen Aquaspear today?"
"She was on a hunting patrol before you woke up. She should be back here soon."
"Okay." DarkMoss started, finishing up her mouse. "Do you think Blacktip needs to see my shoulder again?"
"If she needs to see you, she'll come get you." Silverpatch licked her chops.
"I want to go for a walk, maybe hunt but I can't." DarkMoss complained. "Maybe I can ask and Blacktip if it would hurt my shoulder even more." DarkMoss thought out loud."
"You, have fun with that. Imma just going to lay here." Sliverpatch laid down on her side. Basking in the warm sun.

DarkMoss limped over to the medicine cat den.
"Hey Blacktip! Are you in there?" DarkMoss peered in the bramble den. Blacktip's white fur and bright blue eyes stuck out of the shadow of the den.
"Yes?" She replied.
"Do you think it would hurt my shoulder even more if I go for a walk?"
"I don't think so. Just be careful. And then..." she trailed off, staring at DarkMoss like she wasn't there.

"And then..." DarkMoss repeated.
"Oh, uh, and then come to my den when you come back."
"Are you okay?" DarkMoss questioned.
"Yeah, of course." DarkMoss said a quick thanks before walking out of the den.

"Silverpatch, get up. I can go." The brown spot on her chest stood out one her white and light grey fur. Silverpatch let out a soft moan.
"Noooo." She complained.
"It'll be good for you. And this is all you did yesterday, maybe you hunted a little bit then laid in the middle of the clearing for the rest of the day. Probably getting in the way of everyone." Silverpatch looked up at DarkMoss, she was obviously not amused.
"Ugh, Fine." She replied while getting up. DarkMoss tested her leg while Silverpatch got up. She could put a bit of weight on it, but not a lot. "Alright, let's go I guess." She murmured.

Silverpatch shook out her white fur. The two she-cats walked out of camp. Silverpatch, who was messing around, walked sluggishly.
"Where do you want to go?" DarkMoss asked her.
"Fallen tree?"
"Sure, wanna ra-" DarkMoss started, "oh, never mind. I got a dead leg thats wants to rebel." DarkMoss playfully shook her leg as if it was limp.
"Your going to regret that." Silverpatch said.
"Nope, I already have been, since I woke up." DarkMoss replied.
"Your a mouse-brain." Silverpatch chuckled.
"Your the mouse-brain" DarkMoss argued.

The two she-cats playfully argued until they reached fallen tree.
"Your the fox-heart! I'm surprised that you haven't tackled me yet!" DarkMoss yelled.
"Don't make me." Silverpatch threatened her friend. She raised her paw, claws unsheathed.
"Wow, so scary." DarkMoss joked.
"Let's go do the creek and follow it to the lake." Silverpatch decided.
"Okay." DarkMoss held her leg up a off the ground, clear of the ground. Picking up her pace to a mix of a limp and a trot, she went over to the creek near by.

"Hey you can finally beat me at a race now." DarkMoss commented.
"Shut up." Silverpatch easily caught up.

Large oak, maple and sycamore trees were all that was around, other than the random bush or shrub. Silverpatch weaseled her way to the creek. DarkMoss hobbled over to the water's edge, an evil thought crossed her mind. *Should I do it? Yep, she can get over herself!* DarkMoss lunged and threw herself into the creek, splashing water on Silverpatch.
"Hey!" Silverpatch complained. "I thought you hate water. You know, like a cat should!" Shaking the water off her fluffily fur.
"I like water." DarkMoss swam around a bit. "I just hate getting out. Come on in!" DarkMoss swam over to the bank, her pelt stuck to her skin when she got out. She shook off some of the water, and walked behind Silverpatch. The She-cat played around with a frog. She followed it until it hoped into the water. DarkMoss got up as silently as possible and crept up behind Silverpatch. Using her good shoulder, she pushed Silverpatch in.

"What was that for?" Silverpatch said when she surfaced.
"It's not too bad now is it?" DarkMoss smirked.
"You little fox-hearted mouse-brained *thing."* Silverpatch cursed.
DarkMoss waded into the water again.
"Should I try to catch a fish?" DarkMoss asked.
"Do what you want, just don't make me drag you back."

DarkMoss starred at the water, looking for any dark objects that could be a fish. Faint reflections of the trees above her spotted the water, casting odd shadows on the surface. A quick silver flash caught the corner of her eye. She located where the small fish was and decided how to catch it. The small fish danced around for a bit, going under and around DarkMoss but not where she could catch it. A moon seemed to pass before the fish came in front of her. DarkMoss tensed her mussels. She drove her head into the water. She felt the fish in her mouth and bit down. Nothing. She lashed her head and found another fish. She bit down and grabbed it. DarkMoss ripped her head from the cold water and got out as quick as she could.

"What was that all about?" Silverpatch ran over to DarkMoss. Confusion filled her eyes.

"Caught a fish." DarkMoss said, nudging the dead fish over.
"I think your a fish." Silverpatch replied.

Chapter four

DarkMoss limped into camp exhausted. Her fur was still damp.
"I still don't get why you pushed me in." Silverpatch brought up.
"I don't know. It seemed fun." DarkMoss replied. She shook out her fur once again in hopes of getting Silverpatch wet again. DarkMoss padded over to the fresh kill pile and dropped her fish off. Perhaps the kits could try it since it wasn't big enough to fill a cat.
"I'm going to Blacktip's den." DarkMoss stated while walking towards the medicine cat's den.

The medicine cat's den was covered with the light from the setting sun.
"Blacktip?" DarkMoss peered her head into the den. The fluffy cat turned her head, another set of eyes looked at her.
"Oh, Darkmoss. Come on in." Blacktip said a bit franticly. DarkMoss walked into the den, a harsh shadow filled the den. Once her eyes got adjusted to the dim light DarkMoss noticed Dawnpaw was the other cat.
"What happened?" DarkMoss said, looking at the young apprentice.
"I ripped out my claw while hunting."
"Ouch." DarkMoss replied.
"Alright, you should be good to go." Blacktip said to the apprentice
"Thank you." Dawnpaw bounded happily out of the den.

"What did you need me for." DarkMoss said.
"I just need to put some more comfrey root on your shoulder."
"Oh, ok. Do you want me to help you?"
"No, I'm good. But thanks."
"No problem." DarkMoss watched as Blacktip chewed up some comfrey root as well as some other herbs. Blacktip walked over and started to plaster it to her shoulder. DarkMoss flinched as her fur was stuck to her side.

"Is your shoulder doing any better?" Blacktip asked.
"Yeah, it was hurting this morning because I jumped up too quick." DarkMoss started. "Then I wanted to wade in the water and it

stoped." She explained.
"That's good, do you want a poppy seed to help you sleep?" Blacktip asked.
"I think I'm good."
"You should be good to go again, let me know if it starts to hurt again."
"Will do. Thank you." DarkMoss said, waiting a moment before leaving.
"You're welcome, and good night!" Blacktip called out.
"Good night."

DarkMoss dropped the fish next to the nursery. *I hope they're still awake!* She thought. DarkMoss peeked her head in.
"Hi DarkMoss!" Snowkit looked up from her battle with Lillykit and Quailkit.
"Sorry to bother you, but I'll watch the kits for a bit if you want." DarkMoss asked Mistyheart, Quailkit and Snowkit's mother, and Sapwisker, Lillykit' mother.
"I think a small walk wouldn't do us bad, what do you think Sapwisker?"
"I guess, just don't get the kits too worked up, ok?" Sapwisker told DarkMoss.
"I'll try not to." The two queens walked out of the den.
"What do you want to do DarkMoss!" Quailkit squeaked.
"Let's play moss ball!" Snowkit ran into the queen's den.
"Yeah! Come on Quailkit! Snowkit hurry up!" Lillykit tumbled to the center of camp, followed by Quailkit.
"Hang on!" Snowkit muffed, she was holding a wad of moss.
"Don't get too loud, there might be cats trying to got to sleep." DarkMoss told them.

"DarkMoss is on kit duty!" A meow from across the clearing caught DarkMoss' attention. She looked around towards the front of the camp. Blazefire and Sootpaw has just came in.
"Sootpaw, come here!" DarkMoss yelled back to her. Sootpaw bounded away from her mentor.
"What?" Sootpaw asked.
"You know that Blazefire is always on kit duty, right?"
"What do you mean?"
"He always has to watch you, *Sootkit."*

"Im not a kit." Sootpaw defended herself. "Your *darkkit* then."
"Hey watch this DarkMoss!" One of the kits squeaked.
"Your right, your not a kit." DarkMoss said.
"I know this."
"Do you want to know why?" Sootpaw said a quick sure. "Because kits know how to treat warriors."
"DarkMoss!" Quailkit complained.

"Alright, Alright I'm coming, I'm coming." DarkMoss walked over to Quailkit. He was sitting a tail-length way from the moss ball. "Yes Quailkit?"
"Watch this!" The brown kit positioned himself into a lose crouch. He wiggled his haunches before lunging at the moss, missing it by a mouse length.
"That was good, but you need to tighten it up a little. Like this." DarkMoss put herself into a crouch. Quailkit copied her, his crouch was better but still a little off.
"Move your paw back a little." DarkMoss corrected him.
"I want to do that!" Snowkit came over to Quailkit, and copied what he was doing.
"Lillykit, come on! This is fun!" Snowkit called out to her friend.
"But there's a fish over here." DarkMoss stood up and looked at lillykit. She was pawing at the fish that DarkMoss had brought them.
"Oh, yeah. I forgot about that. I brought that for you guys to try." DarkMoss padded over the the silver fish.
"Who caught this?" Snowkit asked.
"I did. Now go on, take a bite" The kits gave a shocked glance at DarkMoss.
"I'll go first!" Lillykit broke the silence. She bent down and sniffed the fish. She opened her mouth redundantly before taking a bit. "It's not too bad." Lillykit said with her mouth full.

Quailkit And Snowkit bit the fish at the same time.
"Eww! That's nasty!" Snowkit squeaked.
"It's not that bad." Quailkit stated. Lillykit let out a big yawn beside Quailkit.
"Come on, bed time." DarkMoss herded the three kits into the den.
"Can you lay with us until we fall asleep DarkMoss?" Snowkit asked.
"I guess." DarkMoss curled up in one of the queen's nest. The den

was comfortably warm. She laid down, getting comfortable in the soft nest. Lillykit, Quailkit And Snowkit laid down next to her. She already heard a kit snore a bit.

"DarkMoss." A whisper woke darkmoss. She didn't realize that she had fallen asleep. DarkMoss carefully got up, trying not to wake the kits up.
"Thank you DarkMoss, we needed that walk." Mistyheart thanked her.
"It was no problem, and at anytime I'll be happed to do it again." DarkMoss replied happily. Sapwisker went into the den. Mistyheart thanked her again and went into the den.

Chapter five

"Come on DarkMoss!" Sootpaw ran into the warriors den. It had been quite a few days since she hurt her leg. DarkMoss slowly got up. The morning sun had barely came up, shining a faint light over the clearing.
"I'm coming, I'm coming." DarkMoss had promised that she'll take Sootpaw on a hunting patrol. "Is Blazefire awake?" DarkMoss asked.
"Yeah, he's by the entrance." Sootpaw replied.
"Should I ask Coontail to see where we're hunting today?" Coontail was Blazefire's brother and the clan's deputy.
"I think Blazefire already asked." The two cats walked toward the entrance. Blazefire was sitting their, twitching his tail slightly.
"Finally your here." Blazefire said sternly.
"Where are we hunting?" DarkMoss asked Blazefire.
"By the waterfall. But we'll also be hunting along the way"
"Alright, Let's go. Come on, *Sootkit*." DarkMoss joked with Sootpaw.
"Alright, *Darkkit*. Let's go."
"Are you guys going to fight the entire time?" Blazefire jumped in. The three cats walked out of camp, and turned behind it to head to the waterfall.
"Probably." DarkMoss sarcastically replied. Blazefire looked down and lightly shook his head.
"Quit being so serious. It's not just kits that can fun you know." DarkMoss told Blazefire.
"I think you go beyond the line."
"Oh shut up. You'll be doing the same before sunhigh." DarkMoss said.
"Sure." He replied vaguely.
"I smell a rabbit." Sootpaw butted in. DarkMoss and Blazefire sniffed the air. A trail went off into the bushes next to them.
"Good call. I never smelled it." DarkMoss replied to Sootpaw.
"Sootpaw, go around the rabbit. DarkMoss and I will stay here. You need to chase the rabbit to us, but if you can catch it. I know your fast enough." Blazefire directed.
"Okay!" Sootpaw bounded off quietly in the undergrowth.

DarkMoss walked away from Blazefire for a second. She crouched down and pricked her ears. Moments past, a russell of leaves broke the silence. After locating were the rabbit was, DarkMoss quickly fixed her stance. Sootpaw lunged at the rabbit, but just a whisker length behind it. DarkMoss and Blazefire immediately cased after the rabbit. DarkMoss ran as fast as she could, he shoulder starting to sting a bit. The rabbit was only about a fox length away from the racing cats. The rabbit quickly turned. DarkMoss turned nearly with it, Blazefire was turned a second late, nearly running into DarkMoss. She debated on looking back to see where Sootpaw was but she decided not to. Blazefire caught up to DarkMoss. DarkMoss looked behind, Sootpaw was catching up quick.

Sootpaw pent her ears down and screwed up her eyes. She lunged and tripped the rabbit. DarkMoss tried to stop, but slipped on some dew covered moss. She got her bearing and looked behind her. Blazefire has just killed the rabbit. Sootpaw was getting up from the ground, she shook out her pelt when she got up.
"Well That was an interesting hunt." DarkMoss stated, she sat down and licked her paw to drag over her head.
"Come on, Let's bury this and continue on." Blazefire commented. They buried the rabbit quickly.

"It's been awhile since I've been to the water fall. I forgot how pretty it is." DarkMoss looked down the gorge. The water fell down it, it hit a rock then fell into a small pool. Although she didn't know for sure, DarkMoss was pretty sure this is were the medicine cats go at half moon.
"I've never been here." Sootpaw stated.
"Yes you have." Blazefire told her.
"No I haven't."
"You caught your first piece of prey here." Blazefire argued.
"And it's not even sunhigh." DarkMoss added in.
"Really." Blazefire glared at DarkMoss.
"Yep." She replied.

"Can we split up?" Sootpaw asked.
"Sure, Sootpaw you'll hunt with me, DarkMoss I'm pretty sure you can hunt by yourself." Blazefire directed.
"I want to hunt with DarkMoss!" She playfully squeaked like a kit.

"She can hunt with me." DarkMoss defended Sootpaw.
"Alright, Just don't scare the prey away with your laughter." Blazefire told them.
"Okay." DarkMoss sounded like a kit that didn't get exactly what it wanted.
"Come on DarkMoss! I know a good spot!" Sootpaw bounded off a few fox lengths.
"I thought you haven't been here." Blazefire called out to Sootpaw.
"Well I've been here now!" The white apprentice replied.

DarkMoss and Sootpaw walked off into the denser part of the BirchClan forest. DarkMoss opened her mouth to try any prey near by. DarkMoss Had a eerie feeling that she was being watched.
"Sootpaw?" DarkMoss started. "Do you have the feeling that someone is watching you?" She asked.
"No. Why?"
"Oh, it must just be me then." DarkMoss told her. They padded on, the eerie brick in her fur stayed but, Small talk made the short walk shorter.

They shortly arrived at a small clearing surrounded by berry bushes. It wasn't long before a vole wondered into the mossy clearing. DarkMoss glanced at Sootpaw, who was crouching on the other side. She looked at the vole determinedly, only loosing her crouch to get a okay from DarkMoss. She repositioned her stance before leaping onto the brown rodent's back, snapping it when she landed.
"Next time try to be as quite as possible, but everything else was good." DarkMoss instructed. She heard a faint 'yeah *Sootpaw!'* Followed by a faint chuckle of laughter. DarkMoss stood taller, looking around for a cat. She heard a loud crack followed by a quick 'uh oh.'

"Help!" A wail came as something came crashing down from a tree.
"Aquaspear!" DarkMoss heard Brambletail yell, she was up in a tree above Sootpaw. Aquaspear landed heavily on the ground.
"Ugh." Aquaspear said as she rolled herself to her feet.
"What were you doing up there?" DarkMoss asked. "You nearly squashed Sootpaw."
"We where stalking you!" Brambletail ran up behind Aquaspear.

"We weren't supposed to tell them you mouse-brain." Aquaspear shook her fur out.
"Well now we can't hunt here." DarkMoss pointed out.
"Then let's go somewhere else." Brambletail replied. Sootpaw buried her vole then caught up with the rest of the new hunting patrol.

"DarkMoss, isn't Blazefire Sootpaw's mentor?" Brambletail asked.
"Yeah, we spilt up and Sootpaw wanted to hunt with me." DarkMoss answered. They found a larger clearing and hid in the bushes surrounding it. Large oak trees scattered around it. Before long the four cats had caught a few squirrels, two more voles and a thrush. They met up with Blazefire at the water fall.

"I'll be back guys, I'm going to get that vole that Sootpaw caught earlier." DarkMoss dropped the prey she was carrying and bounded into the woods.
"Well she's gone." DarkMoss heard Blazefire tell the others.
"Yep!" DarkMoss called behind her.

Chapter Six

DarkMoss bounded away from the cats. Thick woods, vines and various bushes surrounded her. Another eerie burst hit her. She stoped dead in her tracks.
"Who's there?" DarkMoss called out, her voice slightly echoing. She lashed her head around, her fur standing on edge. She heard rustling behind her. She quickly turned to look behind herself. A young grey squirrel ran up a tree. It stoped at the edge of a low hanging branch and chirped at DarkMoss. She readied a jump above her. Quickly, DarkMoss leapt towards the sky, thrusting her paws above her. She felt the soft fur of the squirrel's tail and griped it with her claws. DarkMoss twisted her body as she fell. She heard a crack as she landed, the impact and the weight of DarkMoss had killed the squirrel. She picked it up and glanced around before continuing on.

DarkMoss continued on at a steady pace. The tail of the squirrel dragging the ground. Shortly DarkMoss arrived at the clearing. She dropped the squirrel and sniffed around for the vole. After a few moments of searching she found it. She removed a small pile of leaves and vines, then unburied it. *Sootpaw did a good job hiding it.* She brought the brown critter over to the squirrel and tried to find a way to carry both the squirrel and the vole.

"Excuse me." An unfamiliar voice caught DarkMoss by surprise. She looked behind herself, she was face to face with a cat that looks like a fox.
"Who are you and what are you doing on BirchClan territory?" DarkMoss stood up firm. She look at him in the face.
"I'm fox." The cat said a bit uneasy. "I mean no trouble, I was looking for a cat to ask something."
"And what is this question?" DarkMoss took a challenging step towards Fox.
"I was wondering if my friend and I could join your clan." He asked.
"You'll have to ask the leader and were is your friend." DarkMoss eased her tone a little.

"He's out hunting, maybe we can meet a few nights from now. Maybe by the creek where it meets the lake?" He asked.
"Alright, But I'll meet you at sun-down and I'm telling my friends that if I'm not back by moon-high to send a patrol." DarkMoss threatened.

"Thank you, and I promise we'll be valuable warriors in your Clan."
"Your welcome. Now get off BirchClan territory, and your friend better not be hunting on BirchClan land." DarkMoss started. "Many cats would have ripped out your throat for even thinking about crossing. Now go." DarkMoss told Fox. He dipped his head in acknowledgment before running off. DarkMoss quickly grabbed the vole and the squirrel and padded off.

DarkMoss felt that she couldn't have gotten to her friends quicker. She padded into the small clearing, hearing small talk as she came in.
"I thought you where just getting a vole?" Blazefire asked. Sootpaw and Brambletail turned their heads to look at DarkMoss. Aquaspear shortly followed.
"It was an easy catch." DarkMoss replied.

"You smell funny, did you meet another cat?" Sootpaw stated.
"Yeah, I did, a rouge. He said that he wanted to join the clan with his friend. So now I'm meeting them at sundown a few nights from now." DarkMoss told them.
"What if the rouges want to kill you?" Blazefire inquired.
"The one I met, Fox seemed to skittish, and I threatened that if I'm not back to camp by moon-high that a patrol will be sent out." DarkMoss answered.
"Can I come?" Sootpaw asked.
"I would prefer you not." DarkMoss replied.
"Let's get going, we can talk along the way." Blazefire said.
"Well we can mumble anyway." Sootpaw commented.
"That'll shut you up." DarkMoss joked. Every cat picked up as many pieces of prey as they could.

Silverpatch was under high rock, where the leader makes her announcements. Brambletail went out with of camp with Aquaspear, probably to cause trouble. DarkMoss didn't see where Blazefire went off to and Sootpaw went off to talk with the other

apprentices.
"Hey DarkMoss." Ashstar made DarkMoss jump.
"Yes, Ashstar?" DarkMoss replied.
"Can you come into my den for a moment?"
"Yeah I guess. Am I in trouble?" DarkMoss' heart pounded even though she did nothing wrong. *Other than agreeing to meet with two rouges at night!* DarkMoss thought. Ashstar laid in her nest and tucked her paws underneath of herself. DarkMoss quickly sat down and wrapped her tail around her paws.
"No, your not in trouble." Ashstar answered. "How did Sootpaw hunt today?"
"She did well. Her crouch was good and proper. The only thing that I told her was to be a bit quieter when she killed something, but she did better the next time." DarkMoss reported.
"Do you think she's ready to be a warrior?" Ashstar asked. DarkMoss thought for a second before answering.
"I'd say so. She did good with fighting and I've seen warriors that can't hunt that well."
"Thank you DarkMoss."
"Oh, it's no problem." DarkMoss shuffled her paw in the dusty floor. She thought about telling her about the meeting with the rouges.
"Is there something that you want to say DarkMoss?" Ashstar prompted.
"Yeah," DarkMoss sighed. "I'm meeting two rouges by the lake a few days from now. The one I met today said that him and his friend wanted to join our clan. I am going to see if they look worthy of being a clan cat." DarkMoss finished.
"Is anyone coming with you?"
"No, but I told the rouge that if I'm not back at camp at moon high, you'll send a patrol after them."
"We could do that. Maybe we could have a few cats come in to listen to what they say and to make sure you're okay."
"That could work, thank you Ashstar."
"You're welcome DarkMoss." DarkMoss got up and walked outside of the leader's den. She jumped off high rock, and went over to the prey pile. DarkMoss picked up a vole and sat next to Silverpatch. Shortly after, Brambletail, Aquaspear and Sootpaw joined them.

Chapter Seven

"Alright, Emberstream, Crystalpelt, Firelight, Aquaspear, And Barkpelt, you're going to go towards the two-leg bridge and great oak. DarkMoss, Silverpatch, Adderclaw, Shrubberry, And Tuffwhisker, your going to go to the waterfall and fallen tree. Ashstar decided to do things differently for today's patrol. The patrols will go where I told them and will meet about half way between fallen tree and great oak." Coontail, the deputy of BirchClan, announced to the crowed cats. DarkMoss walked off to the warrior's den. She sluggishly walked into the den, to Silverpatch's nest.
"Silverpatch, get up. Silverpatch." DarkMoss shook her shoulder. Silverpatch twisted a turned, rolling on her back she opened her eyes. She stretched before getting up.
"We're on a patrol." DarkMoss told her.
"With who?" Silverpatch got up to her feet and shook out her fur.
"Adderclaw, Shrubberry, And Tuffwhisker."
"Ugh, a bunch of toms." Silverpatch complained.
"Hey, it could just be you with them."
"True." Silverpatch followed DarkMoss out of the den, and to the entrance, where the rest of the patrol was waiting.

"Hey DarkMoss!" She heard a kit squeak behind her. She looked behind herself to see Snowkit running up to her.
"Aren't you suppose to be asleep?" It was early morning, the sun had barley risen.
"Yeah, but I wanna come with you!"
"You're too small."
"No I'm not!" DarkMoss picked up the kit and walked towards the nursery. Snowkit squirmed until she realized that she wasn't getting away.
"Please!"
"No, your too young." DarkMoss mumbled through a mouth full of fur. She placed the kit on the ground and nosed her in the rest of the way into the queen's den.
"I'll play with you in a bit, okay?"

"Okay." DarkMoss walked back to the patrol.

"Ready?" Adderclaw announced. Most of the cats answered with a nod but some with a quick 'yep.' The patrol turned to go behind camp. They headed up toward the ravine. DarkMoss quickly walked close to the edge. The patrol didn't have to mark this part of the territory, but only quick sniffs to see what was around.

They came up to the waterfall quickly. Curiously, DarkMoss sniffed around the clearing. She could easily tell where one cat was at anytime. She found out that Silverpatch had stopped by with Blazefire, Sootpaw, Aquaspear, and Brambletail while she was out. She was pretty sure it was around the time that DarkMoss met with the rouge.
"Hey Silverpatch." DarkMoss called to her friend.
"What?" She walked over. The rest of the patrol marked and took a few drinks from the creek.
"When did you come here yesterday?
"I was taking a short walk and hunting a bit when I heard something so I came to check it out."
"Oh, ok."
"Why?" Silverpatch asked.
"I was in that hunting patrol."
"I know."
"DarkMoss, Silverpatch come on, you talk and mark at the same time." Tuffwhisker called.
"You went to get Sootpaw's shrew, was it?" Silverpatch questioned herself.
"Vole." DarkMoss blandly replied.
"Oh." she replied. The two cats joined back up with the hunting patrol.

They quickly made it to the spot where DarkMoss had pushed Silverpatch in. She gave a cheeky smile towards Silverpatch.
"What?" She looked at DarkMoss confused.
"Wow, I thought I couldn't remember anything." DarkMoss dropped her smile. She regained it after remembering what all happened when she pushed Silverpatch in the creek.
"Wait." She thought for a moment. "You mouse-brain." She shoved into DarkMoss.

"Guys I got sent of two rouges." Shrubberry called from in front of the patrol. DarkMoss curiously trotted up to Shrubberry. She lightly opened her mouth, and smelled around. *Fox and his friend.*

"As a random conversation starter, who would you find most suitable for a mate?" Silverpatch asked.
"No one and you know that." DarkMoss said calmly.
"Is that a question for the whole patrol." Shrubberry snickers as he looks over at Adderclaw, giving him a slight nudge.
"Sure, if you want it to be." Silverpatch happily responded.
"I think Emberstream." Tuffwhisker said proudly. "But if you tell her so help me." He threatened.
"I'm not going to say, but how about you, *Adderclaw."* Shrubberry looked over at his friend, he pent his ears down for a split second.
"Uh, I think..." he trailed off.
"Dar..." Shrubberry tried to help.
"Lillytail." He blurted out. Shrubberry gave a confused glance.
"Anyone else?" DarkMoss hollered bit loud. The patrol went silent for a while.

The patrol headed toward fallen tree. DarkMoss was pretty sure that the constant chattering was driving the rest of the patrol crazy, or at least Adderclaw.
"You know what?" Silverpatch started after a quick moment of silence.
"What?" DarkMoss was pretty sure she head Adderclaw sigh.
"I think Snowkit likes you."
"What?!" Silverpatch gave a slight chuckle as Tuffwhisker glanced back, his eyes filled with confusion.
"Not like that! I mean like she looks up to you."
"Oh, you had me concerned for a second." DarkMoss thought for a moment. "Why'd you say that?"
"Like How she wanted to go on the patrol, just because *you* were going on the patrol, it obvious." Silverpatch explained as though DarkMoss was being stupid.
"Every kit wants to go on patrol Silverpatch. What makes Snowkit any different?"
"But it's always *Snowkit* wanting to do everything that you do."
"That sounds pretty *obvious*, if you asked *me*." DarkMoss looked up and realized that Silverpatch and herself had fallen behind. She

looked over at fallen tree. A grey tom sat on it.
"Who are you, and what are you doing on BirchClan Territory." DarkMoss said sternly, Silverpatch not saying a word.
"Two cats seem like a pretty small clan, but whatever you want to believe sweetheart." DarkMoss sighed heavily before repeating her question.
"*Who* are *you* and what are *you* doing on BirchClan territory? And *don't* call me *sweetheart."* DarkMoss said the last bit through clenched teeth.
"Patch is my name and being a rouge is my game." Patch jumped off of fallen tree, his tail hung proudly above his back as he walked towards the two she-cats.
"That sounds more like a *kittypet* name if you ask me." DarkMoss mocked the tom.
"At least *my* name stays the same." Patch merely chuckled. Silverpatch nudged DarkMoss and whispered a hiss.
"Shut up, your only fueling his flame." DarkMoss glared at Silverpatch after her remark.
"But That makes it more *exciting*." Patch butted between Silverpatch and DarkMoss. He quickly turned in front of Silverpatch, letting his tail drag under her chin.

Chapter Eight

DarkMoss glared at Patch, wishing he would go back from wherever he came from.
"Stay *away* from *her*."
"A little protective much?" He inquired.
"You know," He started, "your fur is bristling. Are you intimated?" He smirked.
"I could take you down any day! I'm a trained warrior that *knows* how to fight!" Silverpatch quickly came over to DarkMoss, trying to clam her down.
"Oh really now?" Patch slid out his black claws.
"Both of you guys are acting like kits, now come on DarkMoss."
"So *DarkMoss* is it. And who might this be?" Patch walks between DarkMoss and Silverpatch, wrapping his tail around her neck again.
"I'm Sil-Silverpatch." She studdered. DarkMoss calmed herself down a bit.
"Come on Silverpatch, let's just go back to camp."
"What's the rush?" Patch purred. He padded closer to DarkMoss, too close for her comfort. A rustle distracts Patch and DarkMoss. An orange blur lunged himself between the quarreling cats. It was Firelight.
"There's really no need for this." Silverpatch butted in. Firelight glared at her, telling her to be quiet.
"Oh lookie here, it's DarkMoss' mate to come save the day!" He says happily.
"Oh shut up you flea bitten rough." Firelight cursed at the light and dark grey tom. DarkMoss realized that he had a long scar behind his ear.
"Oh did you get that scar from fighting with the wrong cat? Because I give you a matching one on the other side!" DarkMoss shoved Firelight to the side of her to get face to face with Patch.
"You fox-hearted kit." DarkMoss spat And turned away from Patch.
"Oh am *I* the kit? Because *I'm* not the one throwing meaningless threats even though you *know* your not going to do them." DarkMoss pent her ears down.
"Oh really?" DarkMoss said, turning her head to face Patch.

"DarkMoss stop!" Firelight and Silverpatch screamed at the same time. DarkMoss ran into fur sooner than she thought. She clawed out a tuff of fur before being pulled off.
"Who pulled me off!" DarkMoss looked behind her and seen Silverpatch holding her by her scruff. Firelight was shaking himself off. Blood was staining the fur around his shoulder.
"I'm so sorry! I thought you were Patch!" Silverpatch finally let go of DarkMoss' scruff.

"Just go home Patch. And *never* return." DarkMoss demanded.
"Don't hold your breath on that." Patch gave a final glance at Silverpatch and proudly trotted off of BirchClan territory.
"Sorry Firelight." DarkMoss held her head low and shuffled her paw in the dirt.
"I know you didn't mean it."
"But still, I shouldn't have gotten so mad that I accidentally attacked my clan mate."
"I knew it!" Patch squealed like a kit. DarkMoss heavily breathed out, slightly shook out any thoughts from her head.
"Let's just head back. DarkMoss it fine I promise, I know you had gotten mad. If anything, it was his fault for starting it."
"Are you sure?" DarkMoss picked up her head just enough to look at him. *At least he looks like he means it,* she thought.
"I'm sure." He replied.
"Let's I hurry, I'm hungry." Silverpatch added in.

"Why do you like him so much?" DarkMoss broke the silence. Firelight took lead and pushed himself a bit further up.
"What do you mean?" Silverpatch quickly replied.
"*Sure.* My question is why, he's such a pain in the neck."
"I don't know, I just do."
"Oh so you *do* like him." Silverpatch thought for a moment.
"Then why are you talking about him so much?" Silverpatch asserted.
"Because he's annoying."
***
"May all cats old enough to catch their own prey gather around high rock." Ashstar announced. DarkMoss got up from lounging near the medicine cat's den and headed over to high rock. It was nearly sun-down. The apprentices where the first to come up, siting

as close to high rock as they can. The warriors and elders filled in the rest of the clearing. DarkMoss sat next to Aquaspear, who looked very tired, Blazefire, Brambletail and finally Silverpatch. Sootpaw was up with the other apprentices. Ashstar flicked her tail in order to quite the cats.
"Today, we have two apprentices that have worked very hard these past few moons." Ashstar started when the clan was silent. She heard a few paws shuffling, probably from the apprentices. Ashstar likes to keep it a secret on which apprentices where being made warriors.

DarkMoss remembered her warrior ceremony, Ashstar walked into the apprentices den and told Blazefire, Aquaspear Brambletail, Adderclaw, And a few other apprentices at the time that four of them where being made warriors.
"Now," Ashstar waited a few moments before calling a name.
"Flowerpaw," The white apprentice stood up, her long white fur groomed neatly.
"You Have excelled in your training, you do promise to follow the warrior code even at the cost of your life?"
"Yes, of course!" Flowerpaw was a little uncertain at first but became more excited by each word.
"Flowerpaw, from this moment on, you'll be called by your warrior name," Ashstar waited a few moments before calling her name.
Them poor apprentices, the best day in their life, full of anticipation.
"Flowerheart."
"Flowerheart! Flowerheart! Flowerheart!" The clan cheered.
"I promise that I'll served this clan proud." Flowerheart sat back down.

"Now, for our next warrior," Ashstar began once again.
"Creekpaw." A few sighs of disappointment where barely audible with Creekpaw's squeal.
"Oh sorry." She mumbled when she realized how loud she was.
"It's all right, everyone is excited when they're made a warrior." Ashstar told the apprentice.
"Do you promise to serve and protect your clan and to follow the warrior code, even at the cost of your life?"
"Yes!" Creekpaw blurted out, nodding her head.
"From this moment on, this new warrior will be called Creekpelt."

An excited, yet quiet squeal came from Creekpelt.
"Creekpelt! Creekpelt! Creekpelt!" The clan cheered once again. Many cats got up and stretched.
"Hey wait a moment, I didn't say I was done yet. I want to make another apprentice a warrior." DarkMoss sat up a little taller, trying to see the confused glances of the apprentices. The clan was silent, Ashstar waited a few moments before speaking the unknown apprentice's name.
"Sootpaw." DarkMoss glanced over at Blazefire, pride shown in his clear yellow eyes.
"Do you promise to uphold the warrior code, even at the cost of your life?" Ashstar's voice rung through out the clearing.
"Yes."
"Then, from this moment on, your warrior name will be Sootnose. May StarClan and BirchClan welcome and love these three apprentices. BirchClan, your dismissed." Ashstar jumped down from High rock.

DarkMoss got up and stretched before joining Blazefire and Silverpatch.
"Congrats Sootnose!" DarkMoss ran up to the young warrior. "Now Blazefire has an apprentice, and he's not on kit duty all the time!"
"Hey!" Sootnose glared at her.
"What?" Blazefire gave Sootnose and DarkMoss a confused look.
"We've been doing this sense she was a kit." DarkMoss pointed her tail at Sootnose.
DarkMoss glanced around for a moment, looking for Silverpatch.
"What are you looking for?" Blazefire asked.
"Silverpat-" DarkMoss cut herself off as she glance behind herself. Silverpatch was sitting behind DarkMoss, her head falling down every few seconds.
"Good luck trying to stay awake Sootnose, Flowerheart, And Creekpelt." Sootnose answered with a 'thanks', Flowerheart answered DarkMoss with a nod and Creekpelt didn't hear her.
"Good night." Silverpatch mumbled as she headed to the warrior's den.
"I'm going with her, good night!" DarkMoss followed after Silverpatch.

Chapter Nine

DarkMoss was woken by the sun peering into the woven bramble den. She lifted her head and seen a new nest next to Blazefire's. A fluffy white lump laid in it. *Sootpaw. Wait no, she's Sootnose now,* DarkMoss thought. She stood up, only a few cats where in the den, including the new warriors. DarkMoss gave a quick stretch before walking out of the den. The bright light blinded DarkMoss for a moment. Once her eyes adjusted, she could see the the clearing was nearly empty. The kits were fighting near Blacktip's den. Willowbreeze, Ottertail, and Heatherlight were lounging near high rock.
"DarkMoss!" DarkMoss looked behind herself, Snowkit, Quailkit And Lillykit, Who was dragging behind them slowly.
"Oh, hi guys." DarkMoss watched as the kits jumped around in excitement.
"Lillykit, are you okay?"
"Yeah, just tired."
"If you want, you can go back to sleep, just let Mistyheart know that I'm watching these two."
"Okay." Lillykit walked towards the queen's den.

"Why was she so tired?" DarkMoss asked.
"She couldn't sleep last night, so she stayed up." Quailkit told her.
"Oh, ok." DarkMoss thought for a moment. "Imma' badger! You can't defeat me!" The kits squealed and lunged onto DarkMoss' back. DarkMoss stumbled at the weight of the kits. She tried to buck the kits off but it didn't work. One of the kits cuffed her ear, the other one way trying to keep their balance.
"Go away badger!" Snowkit squeaked before playfully biting behind her neck. Snowkit And Quailkit jumped off of DarkMoss' back. They bounded in front of DarkMoss. Snowkit reared up in front of DarkMoss first, quickly followed by Quailkit. They both threw blows at DarkMoss. She swiped a paw at Quailkit, trying not to knock him over. He got his balance again and teamed up with Snowkit, they both lunged at DarkMoss.

DarkMoss pretended to fall, landing hard on her back. Quailkit And Snowkit jumped on DarkMoss' slightly lighter brown belly fur. She pretended to struggle to get back up.

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DarkMoss walked into camp carrying a squirrel and vole. She was on a later hunting patrol with Rootclaw, Emberstream and Coontail. It was definitely more of an odd hunt, everyone stayed quite unless a cat caught something or was telling a plan. DarkMoss lightly nosed through the prey pile, finding a plump vole. She grabbed it and went under high rock.
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DarkMoss padded over to Ashstar's den. She stoped at the side and looked up. The same stone den was where she made her announcements.
"Ashstar? Can I came in?" DarkMoss stumbled a little.
"Of corse." Ashstar thought for a few moments before responding.
DarkMoss crept in, ducking under the low hanging entrance. She sat down and tucked her tail around her paws neatly.
"What do you need?" Ashstar asked.
"Tonight is when I'm meeting the rouges."
"Okay, do you want me to send someone else?"
"No, that's not why I'm here. I was wondering if they seem worthy enough to be BirchClan warriors if I can just take them strait to camp." DarkMoss shuffled her paw on the stone floor.
"Only if you think they're good enough. I trust your judgment, DarkMoss."
"Thanks Ashstar. Do you need me for anything else?"
"No, your good to go." Ashstar stretched and followed DarkMoss out of the den. DarkMoss looked up at the colorful sky. The sun was setting, causing an array of colors to take over the normal light blue sky. She let out a sigh, then walked out of camp. She turned left and headed toward the lake.

DarkMoss padded up to the creek, her heart pounding. She sniffed the air. No sign of them yet. She sat down and groomed her fur while she waited.
"Hello?" DarkMoss quickly lifted her head up, she must have dozed off. Fox stood on the other side of the creek. "Can I come over there,

it'll be easier to talk."
"I guess. Where's your friend at?" DarkMoss tone was still a bit stern.
"Thistle come on!" A light grey tabby tom came out from behind a bush. He had gorgeous blue eyes. He jumped over the creek with ease.

"I'm Thistle."
"DarkMoss, why do you want to join my clan?" DarkMoss asked the two toms.
"We're both rouges, as you know, and we've heard a lot about clan life. It seems like it'll suit us well." Fox replied. *I didn't know you have two different eye colors*. DarkMoss looked a bit closer at fox's face, one eye was green, the other was brown.
"How do I know you aren't spies?" DarkMoss looked both cats in the eye. Fox looked frantically at Thistle, who kept a straight face.
"We're not. And we're not from that group of rouges from the other side of the gorge." Thistle told DarkMoss, Fox followed with a quick 'yeah.' DarkMoss quickly looked at Fox as soon as she realized that she was starring into Thistle's eyes. She let out a quick shiver, the sun was completely down, so it got chilly, quick.

"Let's head to your camp. It's getting late, your cold and we can let your leader decide if we can stay or not." Thistle resorted after a minute. DarkMoss agreed and lead the toms to camp. She stayed alert, waiting for one of the toms to try and attack her.

The three cats were nearly at camp. DarkMoss couldn't stop hoping that Ashstar would let the two stay, or at least Thistle. They both seemed nice, especially Fox.
"Are we nearly there?" Thistle asked.
"Just about."
"What's clan life like, well more detailed than what I've heard." He asked.
"If Ashstar, my leader, let's you stay, I'll show you around. Sound good?" DarkMoss replied.
"Of course." DarkMoss lead the cats into camp, Emberstream and Tuffwhisker were watching over camp as they slept.

"Why are you bringing rouges into our camp?" Emberstream asked.
"None of your business." DarkMoss kept walking. She lead the cat to

Ashstar's den. Ashstar told DarkMoss to go to her nest, and that she'll talk to the rouges.

She lingered into her nest, careful not to wake all of the sleeping cats next to her. She walked in a circle for a moment before laying down.she tucked her nose under her tail.

Chapter 10

DarkMoss woke up, something kept poking her in the side. She looked up, her eyes still a little foggy. Silverpatch looked down at her.
"Where were you last night?" She asked.
"What?"
"You weren't at camp when I went to sleep, and now I wake up with you next to me." DarkMoss sat up and cleared the fog from her head.
"Oh, I was getting those two rouges that I met a while back."
"Are they here?"
"Hopefully. I left them with Ashstar. So hopefully they're still here."
DarkMoss followed Silverpatch out of the warrior den. DarkMoss looked around camp. Her gaze moved across the clearing, finally ending at the prey pile. Two odd cats were there, a red and white cat, then a grey tabby. She thought for a second before blurting out.
"Thistle!" DarkMoss shrunk down on her back legs, wishing that she would've said nothing. Thistle must have heard, he looked at DarkMoss then stood up and headed her way.

"I'm guessing that's Thistle, and his friend?" Silverpatch asked.
"Yeah, the red one is Fox."
"You like him, don't you?" Silverpatch caught DarkMoss off guard.
"What! Uh, no. Of course not!" She stumbled through her words.
"Well, thank you DarkMoss. I'm a warrior now." Thistle told her.
Silverpatch gave a mischievous glance at her.
"Oh, it's no problem. This is my friend, Silverpatch. Silverpatch, this is Thistle."
"Hi Thistle." Silverpatch introduced herself.
"Hello, Silverpatch. As DarkMoss said, i'm Thistle. Now, how about you show me the territory?" He asked DarkMoss.
"Sure, will Fox be coming?"
"No, he seems to know another cat." DarkMoss looked over at Fox, she didn't realize that he was sitting by Sootnose.
"Ok, Silverpatch do you want to come?" DarkMoss questioned.
"Okay, but I might do some hunting."

They chatted a bit longer before leaving camp. DarkMoss asked Thistle how he was accepted into the clan. He said that Ashstar told him and Fox if they sat a silent vigil for a few nights, she'll accept them. She took him to the twoleg bridge first, he seemed to tense up a bit. *Who knows, maybe the group of rouges chased him out of their territory once.*

"And this is great oak." DarkMoss told Thistle. He looked up the massive tree. She looked past the tree, into the forest she tracked the fox into. It seemed like so long ago, and yesterday at the same time. They padded on, coming up to a willow tree next to the lake.
"We call the lake, well, the lake."
"I'm going hunting, I'll catch up with you guys in a bit." Silverpatch ran off from the patrol
"Alright, bye Silverpatch." DarkMoss told her friend.
"I guess it's just us then?" Thistle told DarkMoss, she replied with a nod.
"Up ahead is fallen tree, which is were we where last night."

After showing Thistle the large territory, they walked into camp. DarkMoss was able to catch a squirrel while by the waterfall. DarkMoss padded over and dropped it off in the prey pile she nosed through it for a second, finding a vole. She grabbed the brown critter and went over by the medicine cat den.

She laid down and took a bit of her vole. After a moment, Aquaspear flopped down next to DarkMoss; she ripped a bunch of feathers from her blackbird.
"Hello." She mumbled through a bunch of feathers.
"Hi, Aquaspear." DarkMoss took another bite of her vole.
"You know that Finchwing kitted today, right?"
"No I didn't. How many is there?" DarkMoss finished her vole.
"three, two toms and a she-kit. They haven't decided on names yet."
"Okay. I'm going to looked at the new kits then keep Lillykit, Snowkit and Quailkit busy so Finchwing can get some rest." DarkMoss stood up and walked over to the nursery.

She looked inside, Reedtail nodded, allowing DarkMoss to come in. The brown tabby was the father to the new kits. DarkMoss walked in, careful not to wake the sleeping queen. three kits were curled up at Finchwing's belly.

One of the toms was an orange tabby with darker paws, the other was a reddish brown with white paws, tail tip and muzzle, and the she-kit looked just like Reedtail.
"Do they have names yet?" DarkMoss whispered.
"Yes, this one is Sapkit, Hollowkit and Whitekit." Reedtail pointed to each of his kits.
"Those are beautiful names." DarkMoss told him. She backed out of the den and shook out her pelt. She trotted over to where Aquaspear was still laying down. DarkMoss sat down next to her.

DarkMoss scanned the clearing, looking for Quailkit, Snowkit and Lillykit.
"Aren't they cute?" Aquaspear looked up from her sprawled out lay.
"They're adorable. Oh, and they have names now."
"They do? Tell me!" Aquaspear propped herself up more,
"The She-kit is Sapkit and the toms are Whitekit and Hollowkit."
Aquaspear only replied with an 'aww.' DarkMoss looked across the clearing again. She saw Quailkit, Snowkit and Lillykit stoped mid stalk. DarkMoss acted like she didn't see them. She continued to talk to Aquaspear.

She kept her ears pricked for any sign of the kits getting closer. After a few moments she glanced back over. Snowkit was crouching down into a lunging position. The other two was still stalking up to where Snowkit was, which was only a fox length away. Taking another look out of the corner of her eye. Snowkit was wiggling her haunches. Before she could lunge at DarkMoss, DarkMoss thrusted her hind legs down and twisted her body. She landed right behind the kit, causing her white fur to stand up in alarm.

"How did you know we were stalking you?" Snowkit sat down, her fur still stood on end.
"You where in plane sight. I could've seen you for a few tree-lengths away."
"Oh." Quailkit mewed. The kits stayed quite for a moments.
"Look out! It's a fox!" Lillykit squeaked.
"Nope there is two of us!" Aquaspear heaved herself to her paws.
The two she-cats snarled and snapped at the kits as they threw made up blows at their muzzles.

"DarkMoss, Ashstar wants you." Thistle trotted over from the

leader's den.
"I'll come back as soon as I can, okay?" DarkMoss padded over to the leader's den, the kits paused their game with an 'aww' before lunging on Aquaspear.

Hello everyone! I can't believe that we're near 200 reads! I didn't know so many people liked my book. But anyways, this is on of the rare times that I put an author's note in with the book, But I'm hopping that more people will start looking in the comments for stupid stuff and sometimes an updated version of 'cats of BirchClan.' I'm rambling, but if you have any ideas or thoughts on my book, please put them in the comments, I'd love to read them. Here's an odd question to ask you guys: Do you like to read/watch Jacksepticeye and Markiplier? If so, go check out hgfdso, she has an amazing fanfic about a Jack x reader, which is called 'Finally.' So after you get done reading this chapter, go check her out! In summary, please look in the comments some times and please put what you want in there too, as I've said, I'd love to read them. Finally, check out my friend's book. I guess I'll see you guys in the next chapter, and I hope you like cliffhangers!

Chapter 11

DarkMoss got up shook out her pelt. She trotted to the leader's den.
"Ashstar I'm here." DarkMoss called into the den.
"DarkMoss, come on in." DarkMoss ducked under the low hanging entrance. Her eyes adjusted to the darkness.
"Am I in trouble for something?" DarkMoss wrapped her tail around her paws after she sat down.
"No, of course no." Ashstar sat up, her grey muzzle tinged with lighter grey hairs.
"I was wondering if you wanted an apprentice." The question lightly caught DarkMoss off guard.
"I would love to have one." DarkMoss said after a few moments.
"I'm sure Lillykit would love to have you as her mentor." DarkMoss let her tail fall completely to the ground. She wished that she could mentor Snowkit.
"I know you wanted to mentor Snowkit, but I think you'd be the best mentor to Lillykit." Ashstar said after a moment.
"When will they be apprenticed?" DarkMoss asked.
"In the morning. You know, you would make an amazing mother."
"What do you mean by that?" DarkMoss stammered.
"You seem to make it a duty of yours to play with the kits, and they absolutely love it."
"I guess, but I do that so their mothers can get out of camp or so they're wore out before they need to sleep."
"It's getting late, you will have a long day ahead of you. Also see if you can get the kits to sleep." Ashstar said after a small sigh.
"Okay, can I tell them that their being apprenticed?" DarkMoss asked.
"Yes, just don't tell who their mentor is." Ashstar answered.
"Thank you Ashstar, and good night." Ashstar laid back down in her nest.

DarkMoss was woken by Ashstar calling the cats together around high rock. She was one of the last cats out of the den. She sat down next to Aquaspear and Silverpatch.
"Today, we have three new warriors and three new apprentices."

Ashstar's voice rung throughout the clearing.
"Vinepaw, Cinderpaw And Leafpaw." She waited a few moments before continuing on. "I, leader of BirchClan, Hope that our StarClan ancestors look down at these apprentices. They have trained hard in honor of your noble code." DarkMoss shifted her paws and tried to get a better look at the apprentices.

"Leafpaw, you have shown courage and swiftness with your warrior training. Do you promise uphold and protect the warrior code, even at the cost of your life?"
"I do." The tabby tom answered.
"Then from this moment on, you'll be known as Leaffall." The clan cheered his name a few times.
"Cinderpaw, you have shown spirit and loyalty to BirchClan. To you wish to uphold and protect the warrior code, even at the cost of your life?"
"I do." Cinderpaw's mewed proudly.
"From this moment on, your warrior name will be Cinderstripe. Now," Ashstar called before any cat could start cheering.
"Vinepaw, you have Shown dedication and determination with your training. Do you wish to uphold an protect the warrior code, even at the cost of your life?"
"I do."
"Then from this moment on, you'll be know as Vineclaw."
"Leaffall! Cinderstripe! Vineclaw!" Everyone called the new warrior's names.
"They will sit vigil tonight. Now," Ashstar waited for the clan to quite down.

"Quailkit, Lillykit and Snowkit." The kits proudly walked up to the clan leader.
"You three have reached the age of six moons, it's now time for you to be apprenticed. Quailkit, until you get your warrior name, you'll be known as Quailpaw. Your mentor will be Sageheart. I hope she will pass on her loyalty to you." Sageheart walked up and touched noses with Quailpaw.

"Snowkit, From this moment on, you'll be known as Snowpaw until you get your warrior name. Your mentor will be Aquaspear. I hope she will pass her energy and her spirit on to you." Aquaspear

walked up to Snowkit, and touched noses with her. DarkMoss looked over at Mistyheart and Sapwisker, both looked like they Where going to burst with joy.
"Finally, Lillykit, until you have gotten your warrior name, you'll be called Lillypaw. Your mentor will be DarkMoss." DarkMoss stood up and walked through the crowd.
"I hope she'll pass on her skill of hunting on to you." DarkMoss touched her nose to the excited apprentice.
"I won't let you down." Lillypaw whispered.
"I know you won't." DarkMoss sat next to Aquaspear, who decided not to go back to where they were a few moments ago.
"I hope that your new mentors will pass on their skills and make you all good warriors. Clan dismissed."

The clan broke up and went on their ways. Coontail started to assign border patrols and hunting parties. DarkMoss slowly followed behind Lillypaw as she bounced up to her parents.
"I'm an apprentice now!" She told Sapwisker and Shrubberry.
DarkMoss waited a until Lillypaw bounced over to her.
"Ready? I'm sure Sageheart will come with us, and Aquaspear should come anyway." DarkMoss told the excited apprentice.
"Yes!" She bounced up.
"I thought you where the calm one." DarkMoss lead her to the entrance where Aquaspear and Sageheart were waiting.
"I am, but I'm excited!"
"I thought you got the good end of the deal." Aquaspear said with a grin on her face.
"Me too."
"Hey!" Lillypaw squeaked angrily.
"We're kidding, or at lest I am." DarkMoss reassured the apprentice.

Chapter 12

"What happen!" DarkMoss pushed her way into the clearing. A thick tang of blood tainted the air.
"Coyote. Thankfully there was only one of them." Vineclaw told DarkMoss. DarkMoss heard Sageheart drop the rabbit. They had just returned from showing the apprentices the territory. Cats were lined up beside the woven medicine cat den.
"I'm surprised we didn't hear anything about it."
"We couldn't spare any warriors, you know how hard they can fight." Vineclaw had a bite mark on his back. Thankfully not deep.
"Get yourself to Blacktip. I'll see where I can help." Vineclaw nodded his head and limped over to Blacktip's den.
"I'm going to check on Embertail. I don't know why she fought." She told Aquaspear, Sageheart and the apprentices. They all went off on their own ways, helping where they could.

"Embertail?" She trotted over to the dark tabby elder, her brown fur matted with blood. She saw a slow rise and fall of her chest.
"DarkMoss?" Her voice was hoarse, she lifted her head and tried to look behind herself to see DarkMoss.
"Let's get you to Blacktip's den, can you get up?" The elder looked down in front of her, she laid her head down.
"Embertail?" The elders only reply was a shallow breath, then she fell limp.
"Embertail!" DarkMoss frantically looked around for any cat.
"Adderclaw! Get Blacktip now!" DarkMoss cried out, she ran over to the elder. Her front paw was ripped apart, blood was already pooling around her body.

"DarkMoss what's wrong?" Blacktip called to DarkMoss.
"It's Embertail." DarkMoss backed up to give the black and white she-cat room. Blacktip looked at her limp body for a few moments, before looking up, her gaze dark.
"DarkMoss, she's walking with StarClan now. She demanded that I saw the other cats first, and if their was still time to help her."
"Sorry to bother you then. I-I should've known she was gone."

DarkMoss choked on her words.
"It's okay, your still pretty young, and you didn't know any better." Blacktip waited a moment before hurrying back to her den. A cat being killed wasn't very common. Most times cats die because of old age or sickness. Rarely do they die from fighting.

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DarkMoss stretched in her bed. A moon has past since the coyote attack. A few days ago, Silverpatch asked if Patch could join. *And Ashstar being Ashstar, she let him join.* DarkMoss thought. She heaved herself to her paws. Not really caring if she woke Silverpatch or Aquaspear up. She walked into the clearing, stretching again. She shook out her fur, hoping that it'll fix itself.

"I saved you a vole." Thistle met DarkMoss a few tail-lengths from the fresh kill-pile. Her and Thistle had become good friends sense he joined.
"Thanks. Do you want to battle train with Lillypaw and me today?" DarkMoss bent down and took a bite of her vole.
"I'd love to, what move is it?" Thistle finished the last bit of his mouse.
"I'm going to have a fake battle just to see what she dose. Do you mind being her opponent?" DarkMoss drifted her tail across the dirt, causing a small cloud of dust.
"Sure, we're both about evenly matched anyway, other than size and weight." Thistle was also learning battle moves and hunting techniques. DarkMoss stood up after she finished her vole. She walked over to the apprentice den.

"Lillypaw, you need to get up." DarkMoss called to the sleeping apprentice. She ducked her head into the hollow stone den to make sure she was getting up. She saw the calico she-cat get up and stretched. Lillypaw snaked her way between the other sleeping apprentices.
"Can I get me something to eat first?" Lillypaw whispered shyly.
"Of course." DarkMoss backed out of the way so Lillypaw could get out.
"Thank you." She hurried over to the fresh-kill pile, and picked out a shrew from the day before.

"Ready?" DarkMoss asked Thistle and Lillypaw.

"Yep." Lillypaw perked up a bit. They headed off towards the training area. Which was a large area covered in moss and surrounded by a few large trees. It wasn't very far from camp, just head to the lake, but turn right after about a tree length.

"What are we doing today?" Lillypaw asked as they stood in the middle of the clearing.
"A fake battle between you and Thistle. Remember, claws sheathed." DarkMoss instructed. DarkMoss sat on a stump on the edge of the clearing, watching Lillypaw and Thistle circle each other. Lillypaw made the first move. She jumped over Thistle, landing on her front paws and kicking Thistle's side hard with her back legs. Thistle stumbled and nearly lost his balance. Lillypaw whipped around and rammed into Thistle with her front paws. Thistle was prepared and rolled her to the ground. He had his front paws on her chest while she laid on her back. Lillypaw thrusted her back paws into his belly and threw him off of her.

She quickly got to her paws and surprisingly she ran over to the nearest tree and climbed halfway up from the lowest branch. When Thistle realized where she had went, he headed for her. Lillypaw leaped from the tree and landed squarely on Thistle's shoulders, causing him to fall. He quickly flipped Lillypaw after she stood on him. Lillypaw started to throw hard blows to his face. Thistle must have loosed his grip just enough to where Lillypaw could escape. They stood looking face to face at each other.

"It's your move." Thistle challenged. From what DarkMoss could see, Lillypaw looked him dead in the eye. She glanced to one of his sides then dived underneath of the tom. Lillypaw stood up quickly and threw him off balance. Thistle reached for Lillypaw's back leg, he grabbed it and slung her out from underneath of himself. She twisted around for a moment, trying to stand up. Thistle reared up and threw himself down at Lillypaw. Although he came down hard, he landed lightly on the young apprentice. He looked down at the panting apprentice. He got off of her and helped her up.

"How did I do?" Lillypaw said between breaths.
"You did awesome. I loved how you leaped from that tree." DarkMoss pointed to the oak tree with the tip of her tail.
"I didn't see that one coming." Thistle admitted. Lillypaw walked

over to the puddle that was made by a spring. Thistle joined her after a minute.
"I want to try you next DarkMoss." Lillypaw said after a moment.
"Well, What are we waiting for, Let's go." DarkMoss jumped off the log, she padded up to the center and circled Lillypaw. DarkMoss took the first move quick. She lunged at Lillypaw's shoulders. Lillypaw fell to the ground but twisted her paws just right. DarkMoss stumbled to the side, Lillypaw got up and started to head for a tree again. DarkMoss bolted after her apprentice, meeting her a tail length before they got to the tree.

DarkMoss took a blow at her back legs, kicking them out from underneath of her. Lillypaw kicked up some moss but kept running. She leapt up the tree about two tail lengths then came back at DarkMoss. Lillypaw threw DarkMoss backwards, she hit the ground so hard that she got winded. DarkMoss went limp for a second. Lillypaw stood up proudly on DarkMoss' chest. DarkMoss threw Lillypaw off of her. She stumbled up to her paws, still trying to catch her breath. Lillypaw ran up and gave a few hard blows to DarkMoss' head. DarkMoss swiped Lillypaw's front legs to the side, causing her to fall only in the front until she brought her hunches down with the rest of her.

"Let's call this a tie." DarkMoss said out of breath. Lillypaw stood up again and shook out her ruffed fur.
"Okay, But we'll continue this soon. Deal?" Lillypaw jokingly ordered.
"Deal." DarkMoss agreed. "Ready to head back for a bit? We can do some hunting later on."
"Sounds good to me!" Lillypaw lead the way back to camp, Thistle and DarkMoss falling behind her.

Chapter 13

DarkMoss sat up tired. Still a bit sore from battle training yesterday. *Maybe we can hunt today, and Aquaspear and Snowpaw can join us.* DarkMoss walked into the clearing. A bunch of cat were surrounding Coontail as he organized boarder patrols and hunting parties. Snowpaw and Quailpaw were sharing tongues near the medicine cat den. DarkMoss looked inside the stone apprentice's den, seeing if Lillypaw was still asleep.
"Lillypaw get up." DarkMoss waited a few moments before looking in the den. No one was in there. DarkMoss looked around the clearing again, wondering if she had missed her. DarkMoss didn't see her again. *Maybe she went for a walk with someone.*

"DarkMoss, we're on a boarder patrol, where's Lillypaw at?" Brambletail asked, her brown tabby fur still ruffed from sleeping.
"I think she went out of camp with someone. Who are we on patrol with?"
"Blazefire, Willowbreeze , Adderclaw And Patch, I think that's his name."
"Yep, that's his name." DarkMoss growled. DarkMoss watched as Blazefire and Willowbreeze gathered in a small group with Patch trotting his way over. "Let's get this over with."
"Why, do you hate him?" Brambletail inquired.
"Yes." DarkMoss worked her way over to the patrol, Brambletail following her.

"Have any of you seen Lillypaw this morning at all?" DarkMoss questioned as she joined the group.
"No. Can't you control your apprentice?" Patch was sincere at first, but quickly went back to his normal ways after a heartbeat. Why dose he have to be in BirchClan? Can't he just go back to wherever he was from? DarkMoss wished she could answer those questions.
"You know, ignoring me won't help you, *sweetheart*." DarkMoss let out a nearly quite hiss.
"Can I join you guys?" Silverpatch had ran up behind DarkMoss, nearly making her jump out of her skin.

"I don't see why not." DarkMoss answered.
"I haven't seen Lillypaw, by the way." Blazefire chimed in after a moment.
"Same here." Willowbreeze added.

"What about Lillypaw?" Silverpatch looked at DarkMoss with concern.
"Well, someone wasn't wacthing her. Isn't that your job *DarkMoss?"*
"Shut up Patch, I checked the apprentice den this morning and she wasn't in there. I'm not worried though. She probably took a walk with someone." DarkMoss told Silverpatch.

The patrol headed through the camp entrance and headed to the twoleg-bridge.
"And don't call me sweetheart" DarkMoss added after a moment.
"Maybe we shouldn't waste so much time arguing, *DarkMoss*."
DarkMoss shot a warning glance at the grey tom.
"Are you guys going to argue the entire time?"
"Patch is here, so yep!" DarkMoss replied quickly.

A light drizzle started to fall once they got to the twoleg-bridge. DarkMoss fluffed up her pelt to try to conserve some warmth. Silverpatch walked between Patch and DarkMoss, trying to keep them from arguing. They marked the bridge before heading to the long strip of grass and trees that was their boarder. DarkMoss still padded next to Silverpatch, her pelt slowly getting heavier with dew, every step she took. Hearing something coming towards the patrol, DarkMoss tried to look past a bush to see what it was. She heard the rustling on the bush and she looked up. A large buck was jumping over the patrol. DarkMoss pressed herself to the ground, her wet hair rising up. The buck landed far away from the patrol and continued to bound off to the other side of the territory.

"Are you *seriously* scared of a *deer*?" Patch said, walking over to DarkMoss. She stood up and flattened her fur.
"No, I didn't see it coming." DarkMoss ran to catch up with the patrol.
"Sure, I still think that *DarkMoss* is scared of deer, isn't that right, *sweetheart?"* DarkMoss wished she could rip out his throat. *That would solve quite a few problems.*
"Why do you call me 'sweetheart'?" DarkMoss asked the tom.

"Because it annoys you. And it's fun to see your reaction." Patch replied, actually talking like a normal cat.

"I think it would be nice to be friends instead of arguing all the time." DarkMoss said after a moment.
"Me too, but I still want to argue. At least sometimes, you look cute when your angry." Silverpatch whipped her head around and glared at Patch.
"What did you say?" Silverpatch turned around and faced him.
"You know what I said, but have you seen her get mad? Her fur sticks out and she's like a little brown fluff ball." Patch told his mate. DarkMoss just rolled her eyes and caught up with the patrol.

"You hate him, don't you?" Blazefire asked when DarkMoss caught up.
"Yeah." DarkMoss answered. "Can't you tell?"
"It's pretty *obvious* if you ask *me."* Patch shoved his way between DarkMoss and Blazefire.
"Really Patch?" DarkMoss gave a slight laugh. Patch weaved his way in front of DarkMoss, dragging his tail tip under her chin. She playfully bit the end of his tail, just enough for it to hurt for a moment.
"Hey!" Patch whipped his head around and glared at DarkMoss.
"You should've expected that." DarkMoss said with a small laugh.
"Finally you guys are getting alone!" Silverpatch called out as she caught up.
"*Control* your friend, She just *bit* me!" Patch walked next to Silverpatch.
"Where's Brambletail?" DarkMoss said after a moment, she hadn't remembered seeing her for most of the patrol.
"She left because *you* wouldn't stop *arguing, sweetheart."* Patch told her.

DarkMoss left camp with Thistle to go hunting. The boarder patrol had gotten back a little while ago. Bored, DarkMoss decided to go hunting with Thistle. DarkMoss watched a golden colored leaf fall in front of her muzzle. *Fall has come so quick, it's probably going to be a cold winter*. DarkMoss nearly shuttered at the thought. DarkMoss lead Thistle over to the creek, down by fallen tree. DarkMoss sniffed around, looking for any scent of prey. DarkMoss smelled a squirrel

and chased it up a tree. She chased it out onto a branch. There was only two ways for the squirrel to escape: jumping from the tree or carried down in DarkMoss' jaws. She managed to get the squirrel without falling off.

"What's that?" DarkMoss looked at something that caught her eye.
"What is it?" Thistle called up to DarkMoss. A white figure was in the creek. She looked at it closer from where she was. DarkMoss' heart skipped a beat when she realized what it was. Her heart shattering into millions of pieces. She dropped the squirrel, which nearly landed on Thistle.
"No!" DarkMoss cried out.

Chapter 14

"Lillypaw!" DarkMoss cried out. She stared at the limp cat, trying to see any signs of life. She laid in the creek, hung on a rock as the current pushed down Lillypaw's calico fur. DarkMoss turned around as quick as she could with out falling off the branch. She was about half a tree length up, a tall enough fall to break something. DarkMoss weaseled her way to the trunk of the tree. DarkMoss flew down as fast as she could. The quick glance she got of Thistle told her that he was heart broken too. He followed after DarkMoss, slowly, leaving the squirrel twisted weirdly on the ground.

"Lillypaw." DarkMoss' voice was hoarse with sorrow as she wadded into the freezing water. She picked up her apprentice and took her to the bank. She laid her down gently, then nosed the apprentice. She looked for any sign of life again. Nothing. DarkMoss shoved her nose into her damp fur.
"DarkMoss, we need to bring her to camp." Thistle coked out, his voice filled with grief. DarkMoss looked over at him, he had grabbed the squirrel and walked towards DarkMoss. She sighed and stood up, her legs a bit shaky as she grabbed her apprentice. *Why Lillypaw? I would've traded her life for mine, she would've been such a great warrior.* Thoughts overwhelmed her slow walk back to camp.

Why wasn't I concerned? I should've know something was up. She was way to shy, I should've known better. I'm probably the only warrior of BirchClan that lost an apprentice. She walked slowly, wishing that she was racing Lillypaw back to camp, instead of carrying her.
"I'm really sorry what happened, I-I don't know what to say." Thistle's words where choked and forced out. DarkMoss just kept her head pointed to the ground. DarkMoss gave a light shiver as a cold gust of wind drifted across her wet fur.
"Is there, anything I can do?" He asked. DarkMoss' only reply was a slight nod of her head. They stayed silent until they made it to camp.

DarkMoss walked into camp, not even seeing it in the same way.

She laid her apprentice in the middle of the clearing, hearing muffled gasps from the blood roaring in her ears. DarkMoss started to dry the limp apprentice. Her blue and green eyes where dull. DarkMoss had to look away, the thought of never seeing them again after the vigil.
"What happened!" She heard Sapwisker call out. She raced over to her kit, Shrubberry on her tail.

"I-I found her in the creek, dead." DarkMoss managed to say. Sapwisker licked her kit.
"Who would've done this?" Sapwisker gave DarkMoss a sorrowful glance. Shrubberry kept his nose pressed into his kit's shoulder. DarkMoss shivered again as Blacktip raced over.
"What happened!" She ran over to the dead apprentice and gave her a quick sniff. Thistle walked over and told Blacktip what happened. Blacktip gave one more glance at DarkMoss before darting off to Ashstar's den.

Moments later Ashstar came out and saw the growing crowd of cats. "Cats of BirchClan, please join me under high rock, I have bad news." Ashstar called out once she stood up on her den. The crowd of cats slowly shifted their attention towards the leader. DarkMoss remained where she was. A hunting patrol entered the clearing. Their faces turned from proud to shocked. DarkMoss' heart seemed to shatter again when she saw Quailpaw's and Snowpaw's reaction. They dropped their prey that they was carrying. They ran over to DarkMoss, which she signaled for them to sit down and listen.

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DarkMoss stretched in her nest. The chilly morning was drowned by a wave of grief. Nearly every day started like this. For the past few days DarkMoss stayed in camp or hunted by herself. Fortunately, Coontail hadn't assigned her to any patrols.
"DarkMoss, your on a hunting patrol." Sootnose nudged DarkMoss. She pulled herself out of her nest and followed the white warrior out of the den. The clan was divided up into groups, the two boarder patrols, and a few hunting patrols. Sootnose lead DarkMoss to the group with Silverpatch, Aquaspear, Brambletail, Patch and Sootnose.

"I guess Thistle isn't joining us?" DarkMoss asked. Silverpatch shook

her head.
"We'll be hunting by the willow tree near great oak." Brambletail told DarkMoss. Sootnose bounded out of the camp, DarkMoss being one of the last ones out of camp. The track to the willow tree was silent.
"Where's your apprentice?" DarkMoss broke the silence with a sigh.
"Emberstream is taking her on a boarder patrol." Aquaspear answer.
"I'm surprised you and Patch aren't fighting." Brambletail added.
"I know, it's a shocker." DarkMoss replied blandly. For once, Patch kept silent, which was kind of nice but she wanted to get her mind off of what happened a few days ago.
"Oh, so you *want* to fight, *sweetheart?"* Patch started.
"Alright, let's fight then. It's your turn." DarkMoss stoped and turned to the dark grey tom, she stared into his blue eyes that was speckled with green. Patch looked was caught of guard by DarkMoss' prompting. DarkMoss couldn't withhold the laugh that was building inside of her for a moment longer. She let it out and looked to the ground.

"*Embarrassed* are we? How about you go hide behind your mate, *sweetheart." Revenge feels good,* DarkMoss thought as Patch glared at her. Although she wasn't looking, she could tell that at least Silverpatch was shocked at DarkMoss' comment.
"Let's get hunting." Patch said in a mix of a growl and a mumble.
"I'm down." DarkMoss pushed her way between Silverpatch and Patch.
"*I'm* the leader of this *patrol*." Patch jumped in front of DarkMoss.
"Yeah? Who says?" DarkMoss
"Coontail, *obviously*." Patch shoved DarkMoss' shoulder with his. DarkMoss just rolled her eyes and opened her mouth to smell around. Scents of mice, voles and a rabbit touched her tongue. Scents of blood filled her nose. She turned her head around, seeing Aquaspear, Brambletail and Sootnose holding a prey.

DarkMoss walked into camp carrying a few mice by their tails. The rest of the patrol was carrying either a vole, squirrel, rabbit or a few shrews. DarkMoss lead the patrol to the fresh kill pile. They dropped off their prey, then grabbed a piece for themselves. DarkMoss threw her vole he had picked out the rest of the way to the clearing between the warrior's den and the elder's den.

"I'll be back in a moment guys." The rest of the patrol sat themselves down around her vole. DarkMoss padded over to the leader's den. She saw Coontail watching camp right outside the entrance. DarkMoss pushed her way through the entrance.
"Thank you Coontail." DarkMoss told the tabby and white tom.
"For what?" He responded.
"For putting me on that hunting patrol, I needed to get out of camp for a while."
"Your welcome, did you catch anything?"
"Yeah, quite a bit." DarkMoss' voice trailed off as she watched Thistle carry in a limp Stormclaw. Her black tail dragging behind the tabby tom.

DarkMoss caught up with Thistle, abandoning the conversation with Coontail.
"What happened?" DarkMoss stood next to Thistle, looking down at the black cat. The patrol DarkMoss was on made their way to the limp body.
"I found her like this, sprawled out near Fallen tree."
"What's going on?" Ashstar called from her den. DarkMoss let Ashstar take her spot to see Stormclaw. "Blacktip!" Ashstar called the medicine cat. The white with black tipped medicine cat ran out of her den, her light blue eyes wide with shock.
"We need to address this to the clan. Coontail, get every patrol back to camp."

Chapter 15

"May all cats gather under high rock, we have something that needs to be addressed." The grey leader looked around as the clan gathered underneath of her. Finchwing sat out side of the nursery, Sapkit, Hollowkit and Whitekit curiously looking around as the cats gathered near Ashstar.
"Another cat has died, Stormclaw was a great warrior." Gasps came from the clan, a few cats ran over to her body.
"Blacktip and I believe that she was murdered." More gasps came from the clan as they frantically looked around. Most of their glazes landed on the three rouges, some on DarkMoss.

"It was a rouge, wasn't it?" A cat from the clearing called out. *Surely it wasn't Thistle, right? It doesn't even seem like it was a rouge, they're all nice, even Patch.* DarkMoss thought.
"Now, don't make assumptions about who it was, but I believe it *could* be one of them." Ashstar called out.
"What if it was DarkMoss? She's the one who brought the rouges to the clan, possibly to help do her take over the clan!" She couldn't make out who's voice it was, but her pelt seemed to blaze with fire as the clan turned to see her response. Even her close friends, Silverpatch, Sootnose, Aquaspear, Brambletail, Patch, Thistle and Blazefire looked at her.
"Why would I kill my own apprentice?" DarkMoss cleared her throat and tried to keep her voice steady. "I've *always* been loyal to BirchClan, never would I want to cause harm to my clan-mates."
"What if DarkMoss was just acting as being a kind cat. She could be plotting all of our deaths right now." Another cat called out. With DarkMoss' thought being so clouded from all of the clan's glare she couldn't even begin to think of who said what.
"I never doubted DarkMoss' loyalty to my clan. And I would've hope that my clan wouldn't have acted like kits. We have no need for 'what ifs' or blaming anyone without a proper reason. If you have anything to say, say it now or meet me after I dismiss the clan." Ashstar called out, one by one the glares of the cats moved to Ashstar.

"Anything else?" Ashstar asked when the clan went silent. "Clan dismissed." Ashstar jumped off of high rock and went into her den. A few cats lined up beside Ashstar's den.

"Coontail, is there any patrols I can do?" DarkMoss found the tabby and white tom.
"Uhm, a boarder patrol I guess." DarkMoss had caught the tom off guard.
"Patch, Sootnose, Fox, And Crystalpelt! Your on a boarder patrol from the waterfall to fallen tree!" He called into the sea of chattering cats. Sootnose and Fox where the first to join, Patch followed after a moment.
"Crystalpelt!" Coontail called out again after the white and grey she-cat hadn't showed up. After another moment of waiting, she showed up, her fur bristled when she saw DarkMoss in her patrol.
"Sootnose, your in charge of the patrol." The deputy told the patrol before he left. Sootnose lead the patrol out of camp. No one saying anything.

"Your planning on killing me, aren't you?" Crystalpelt finally broke the silence, she was quite at first, then repeated herself louder.
"Why would I do that." DarkMoss replied blandly, looking to the ground.
"DarkMoss would never kill her clan mate, no mater the reason." DarkMoss was surprised when she heard Patch's voice. She looked at Patch with a warm glance.
"You just joined the clan a moon ago, how do I know your not helping her." DarkMoss fought the urge to turn around and tear her throat out.
"Just leave the patrol if you want to." Sootnose told the she-cat. With out a word, Crystalpelt prance through some bushes.

"You guys didn't have to do that." DarkMoss admitted. With a vole dangling in his mouth, Fox leapt to the mossy path from the dropped creek bank.
"Wow, I need to pay attention more, I didn't even know you left." DarkMoss joked.
"Well, *maybe* if you kept your *head* up, you would know. *Sweetheart."* Patch added after a moment.
"Oh shut up." DarkMoss shoved her shoulder into Patch, nearly

pushing him into Sootnose.
"Hey!" Sootnose called out.

"Grow up *DarkMoss.*" Patch told her.
"I think I'm good." DarkMoss pretended to think for a moment before answering.
"I think you should." Sootnose dived between Patch and DarkMoss.
"I'm still older than you, Soot*kit.*" DarkMoss called her the name she hated the most.
"I'm a *warrior* now!" She reminded DarkMoss.
"Oh, so your Soot*paw* now!"
"It's Soot*nose.* Your taking after Patch too much, you know that?"
"I can see why, I'm amazing." Patch added in.
"No your not." DarkMoss corrected him.
"Well your not any better, *sweetheart."*
"I'm not your '*sweetheart*'." DarkMoss replied. "And stop calling me that." DarkMoss added after a moment.
"It's fun though!" Patch pouted. By now, the patrol was near fallen tree. DarkMoss pricked her ears towards a stick cracking then hearing a heavy set of paws padding towards her. They weren't a cat's, but another bigger animal. DarkMoss flicked her tail upward, causing the patrol to stop. She slightly opened her mouth, trying to figure out what it was. After a moment, she recognized the strong scent. Dog, not just one of them, but probably around three of them.

"Dog!" DarkMoss called to the patrol, she found the nearest tree and threw herself up it. Sootnose and Fox going up another, and Patch was hulling himself up a flimsier birch tree. The higher up he got, the more it bended under his weight. DarkMoss frantically looked across the creek and saw three dogs, a short ginger colored one, another small one that looked like a coyote and a larger black and brown dog. The two smaller dogs let out high pitched barks that made DarkMoss' ears hurt. They ran up to the creek panting hard. The small grey one went into the creek and swam around while the black one wadded a bit. The ginger one decided to lay down in the shallower parts. A loud crack caught everyone's attention. Redundantly, DarkMoss turned her head to face Patch hanging off the broken tip of the birch tree. Looking back over at the dogs, the small grey one started to work her way to the dangling tom, her

short tail was wagging harder every step she took. Another crack made Patch plummet down a few fox-lengths onto the leaf covered ground.
"Patch!" DarkMoss called out, the black dog turned her head to the dusty brown she-cat. Patch sent DarkMoss a scared glance, his fur standing on edge. The grey dog was under a mouse-length from the fear frozen tom.

Chapter 16

With a hiss, Patch clawed the small grey dog. Her short tail wiggling fast as a blur. She jerked her head away, only getting a light scratch. The dog's only response was that she pawed at Patch like she was trying to play with him. The red dog ran up to investigate what was going on, she quickly turned when she caught a different scent. She sniffed around again before putting her front paws on the tree that DarkMoss was on. She let out a slight growl then an ear splitting bark. Only then did DarkMoss realize that she was shaking. The black dog let out a lower bark in response. DarkMoss whipped her head around when she heard one of the dogs squeal. The grey one had a large, bleeding scratch across her muzzle. Patch bolted away from the dog, only to get chased by the red one, then shortly afterwards, the grey one. The black one had already crossed the creek and was heading away from the territory.

Without thinking, DarkMoss quickly climbed down the tree then chased after the dogs.
"DarkMoss! What are you doing?" Sootnose's call faded away as she pushed herself forward. Quickly, she caught up, some how passing the dogs and catching up with Patch.
"Go that way!" She called to the tom, glancing toward the side he was on. Almost immediately, he turned, DarkMoss turned the other way. One dog was behind her, the other following Patch. DarkMoss found a large oak tree and threw herself up it, only stoping when she was on the lowest branch, about three fox-lengths high. DarkMoss heard a two-leg's call for the dogs. The black one had already left, and the red one was heading past the territory. The grey dog paid no attention to her two-leg, only DarkMoss. Every once in a while she would let out a bark that hurt DarkMoss' ears. After what seemed like moons, the grey dog left. DarkMoss climbed down the tree carefully, still watching for the dogs.

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DarkMoss stretched in her nest. It had been a while since the dogs

where on BirchClan territory. Sadly, two more clan mates had died: Crystalpelt and Pineclaw. Whoever the murder was is tearing the clan apart. Friends turned on friends, cats would attack who they thought was the murder. Most cats still thought it was DarkMoss, but it didn't bother her that much anymore, nearly every cat had someone who thought they was the murder, though, the rouges still had the most blame. With leaf-bare approaching fast, prey would become scarce. If cats where to scared to go out and hunt, the clan will starve.

DarkMoss walked out of the den, her pelt still ruffed. The morning patrols had already been assigned, and the left overs on the prey pile were gone. *I'll do some hunting later on,* she thought. A dead leaf fell in front of DarkMoss, most of them had already fallen, very few where still on the trees. DarkMoss laid down in a strong patch of sun light. Letting the sun warm her pelt.

"DarkMoss." She quickly lifted her head when she heard her name. Thistle looked down at her.
"Let me sleep." DarkMoss complained, closing her eyes.
"Do you want to go hunting?" Thistle asked.
"I guess." DarkMoss rolled over on her belly and stood up. Thistle lead the way out of camp.

"Rabbit!" DarkMoss called out. She chased the rabbit past the two-leg bridge, heading to great oak. Everything was in a brown or grey blur while she ran after the rabbit. Thistle, being more stocky, had a harder time catching up. DarkMoss kept getting within a fox-length of the rabbit, but just couldn't push herself the rest of the way. The rabbit dove under a small tree that had fallen. DarkMoss pushed hard with her back legs, sending her flying past the tree. As soon as she landed, she quickly scrunched up her body and lunged at the rabbit. She flew over the ground, coming within a whisker from the panicking brown critter. She flared out one of her front paws, snagging a chunk of the rabbit's soft fur. Nearly tripping over herself, DarkMoss reached for a killing bite, only to be met with the rabbit's claws. She held the rabbit down after she scrunched her face in pain. After a quick moment, DarkMoss opened her eyes and bit down on the rabbit. Warm liquid filled her mouth as the rabbit gave a final kick before going limp.

After a few moments she released her grip, looking back to find Thistle. He was padding up from the small fallen tree. After panting for a few moments, DarkMoss let out a heavy cough.
"Are you ok?" Thistle called out, picking up his pace.
"Yeah, I'm good." DarkMoss replied. Her face started to sting as she realized where the rabbit had scratched her. Blood ran next to her eye and down into her mouth.
"Let's head back to camp, we've caught enough." Thistle said when he was next to DarkMoss. With a nod, she grabbed the rabbit and headed up toward the corner of the territory next to the two-leg bridge.

DarkMoss sniffed around in the leaf litter for the buried prey, her mouth slightly open. She found the shrew Thistle had caught earlier, with a few swipes of her paw she uncovered the prey. Thistle looked around for the mouse DarkMoss had caught.
"Sunfish?" Thistle called out.
"What?" DarkMoss asked.
"Thistle!" DarkMoss looked at a cream colored tom with darker red-brown legs, muzzle, tail and along back. She trotted up near the two-leg bridge, where the tom was.
"I thought it was you, you've gotten so big." Thistle told the tom. "I hope you remember that I'm not going back." Thistle's tone was stern.
"That's not why I'm here, Nutmeg is expecting kits!" Sunfish surprised Thistle.
"Who's Nutmeg?" DarkMoss added in.
"She was my mate before I joined the clan. That's amazing Sunfish, tell her I said congratulations." Thistle informed DarkMoss.
"Aren't you coming with me? She wants to see you." Thistle glanced over at DarkMoss before answering.
"Maybe another time, the clan comes first." Thistle proudly told him, Sunfish looked confused, but nodded his head.
"Alright, she'll be due in about a moon. I'm glad I got to see you again Thistle, tell Fox I said 'hi'."
"Come by and visit some time, please?"
"Bye Sunfish." DarkMoss just nodded to Thistle's response. The cream and red tom said 'good bye' and turned around, padding out of view in the rouge's territory.

Chapter 17

DarkMoss swatted at something tickling her nose. It stoped for a moment then continued on. She opened her eyes to see Brambletail's tail in front of her face. DarkMoss thrusted her hind legs at Brambletail, who was sitting down next to Aquaspear. Brambletail lost her balance and fell backwards. DarkMoss sat up about the time Brambletail managed to catch her balance. A freezing gust of air hit DarkMoss like claws. She peered out of the den to see everything was covered in a layer of snow.
"It snowed?" DarkMoss asked.
"Yep, What happened to your face?" Brambletail tilted her head to the side.
"A rabbit scratched me." Brambletail let out a muffled laugh.
DarkMoss shook her head and padded outside the woven den. Large fluffy snow flakes fell form the pale grey sky. Not a lot of snow had fell, only enough to cover a cat's paw.
"Aquaspear your apprentice has exploded! She's every where!" DarkMoss joked. Aquaspear bounded out of the den, bouncing high in the air when she landed. The three kits, Whitekit, Hollowkit and Sapkit where playing in the snow, trying to catch the falling flakes of snow. Last night, DarkMoss had wondered how Thistle had met Nutmeg. She had asked why he wasn't with her, but he didn't want to talk about it though.

A wad of snow hit DarkMoss' side. She looked at her challenger, the white and grey furred warrior glared at DarkMoss with bright blue eyes. Silverpatch circled around her, trying to hold a laugh. Slowly, DarkMoss drugged her black paw against the snow, gathering a wad of her own. After she got a small pile, she held her paw above the pile, waiting for the perfect time to strike. Silverpatch looked down to scrape another pile together, it was the perfect opportunity to get revenge. With her claws unsheathed to hopefully hold more snow, she took her paw and scopes as much snow as it would hold. Looking at Silverpatch, she slung her paw around, throwing the snow wad at Silverpatch. As soon as it left her paw, DarkMoss whipped around, and darted away. Snow sprayed behind her as she

looked for a spot to hide. She recognized a tree that had a hole on the other side of it.
"Hey!" DarkMoss heard Silverpatch's angry call. DarkMoss turned quickly into the hole, scaring a squirrel that must have been sleep there. After realizing what was happening, DarkMoss squeezed herself up the surprisingly hollow tree. She climbed as fast as she could, not gaining on the grey squirrel at all.

DarkMoss was faced with a blinding amount of sunlight when the squirrel exited out of another hole. Struggling, she managed to fit herself through the small opening. She saw the squirrel bounce to a pine tree. Without any thought, DarkMoss ran to the edge of the oak branch and leapt into the still green tree. Blinded by the green needles, she tried to grab ahold of something. DarkMoss felt fur snag on her claws as she fell. Her body hit many branches and even broke a few as she plummeted to the ground. DarkMoss tried to turn her body so she would land on her paws, but another branch threw her off. DarkMoss shut her eyes closed as she saw the snow covered ground.

Pain griped her body as she landed in the snow on her side. After a moment, DarkMoss lifted her head, still dazed. Silverpatch reached over and killed the squirrel that DarkMoss must have brought down with her. The pain that griped her body started to loosen it's grip as the cold snow made her numb.
"Are you okay?" Silverpatch asked after a moment.
"Yeah, I think so." DarkMoss let her head fall into the snow.
Silverpatch loomed over DarkMoss. With a smile, she dropped a paw full of snow on to DarkMoss' face.
"Really? You fox-heart." DarkMoss mumbled through the snow.
DarkMoss rolled onto her belly, waiting for her head to clear. After a moment, she stood up. Pain throbbed through her legs for a moment, slowly fading away into nothingness.

"Let's go to Fallen Tree." Silverpatch decided after a moment. With a nod, DarkMoss padded after her. They was close to Fallen Tree already, in between camp and the large fallen sycamore tree. The log was darker with rot and half of the tree was hollow. The faint smell of fox put DarkMoss on edge. It had came through the previous night, probably looking for something to eat. The smell of

a cat, maybe two, was also hanging around. One was a bit stronger than the other, nearly seemed fresh, but no tracks where around.
"I'm your leader! Now bow down to me." Silverpatch had leapt up onto Fallen Tree.
"Uhm, I don't think so." DarkMoss padded to the side of the log, about to push into the 'leader.'
"Excuse me? I am your leader, now sit back down!" Silverpatch had just finished talking right when DarkMoss pushed her off. DarkMoss stood up straight and puffed out her chest.
"I'm leader now. Now, go fetch me something to eat. Now." DarkMoss playfully demanded. Silverpatch just rolled her eyes as he mumbled a 'Alright.' She padded off behind DarkMoss.
"DarkMoss come here!" Silverpatch's voice sounded shocked.
"Are you still playing around?" DarkMoss asked as she jumped off the log. She saw Silverpatch looking at the snow behind the log. When DarkMoss got to where Silverpatch was, her jaw dropped. Blood was stained the white clearing. The sent of fox was stronger here. DarkMoss forced to push past Silverpatch, her fur stood on end as she saw a white cat laying in the hollow spot of this end of Fallen Tree. She seen the cat had grey tabby patches alone it's back. With a gasp, she realized who it was. Coontail, the deputy.

She padded over to the dead deputy, through the blood covered snow. She sniffed the tom, his flank stayed still.
"Coontail is dead." DarkMoss said. A pool of blood was around his neck. Bite marks covered the rest of him. DarkMoss carefully grabbed the dead cat's scruff, pulling him out of the log.

Chapter 18

DarkMoss grabbed a vole out of the fresh kill pile. She picked it up and carried it over near the entrance, to where Silverpatch and Patch was waiting. Patch was sharing a squirrel with Silverpatch. The prey pile was slowly losing how full it was every day, but not enough to be concerned yet.
"Good morning Silverpatch, *Patch."* DarkMoss greeted. She laid down next to Silverpatch. She glanced over at Patch, then back over to DarkMoss.
"Good morning DarkMoss." Patch said in a normal matter, not trying to pull some game for once. *What is he planing, he's never like this.* DarkMoss thought.
"DarkMoss, I need to tell you something. Well, we, I guess." Silverpatch stated after a moment.
"Go ahead, I'm listening." DarkMoss swallowed a bite of her vole, waiting for Silverpatch to tell her whatever it was.
"I'm expecting kits." Silverpatch quietly mumbled.
"That's awesome!" DarkMoss responded louder than she would've liked. "When are you due?" DarkMoss asked.
"Blacktip thinks about two moons, maybe a moon and a half." Patch told her.
"That's too long! I bet they'll be adorable."
"I think I'll move to the queen's den in a few more days. It's going to be so lonely!" Silverpatch rolled onto her side, looking up a DarkMoss.
"I'll visit you as much as I can, I promise." DarkMoss told her.
"Why can't you have kits? They can grow up as litter-mates!" Silverpatch stared at DarkMoss with pleading eyes.
"I don't want kits though." DarkMoss laid her head on Silverpatch's shoulder.

"Maybe this would mean that Patch would quit calling me 'sweetheart'." Silverpatch glared at Patch.
"Patch stop tormenting my friend." Silverpatch told him.
"It's not *my* fault DarkMoss can't get along with me." Patch defended himself.

"Can't you guys get along for once in your lives?"
"That's impossible." DarkMoss added. She looked up, small snow flakes were slowly drifting down. The snow had melted a day after Coontail had died, which that was about a quarter moon ago. Blazefire wasn't taking the death of his brother well at all. He barely ate and only left his nest for a bit of hunting every day. The new deputy was Branchwalker, a black and white tom. DarkMoss thought Ashstar could have done a better job at choosing a deputy though.

"Hang on, you couldn't have just figured it out now, so when did you know?" DarkMoss asked, cutting Patch off from whatever he was going to say.
"About a moon ago." Silverpatch answered.
"Why didn't you tell me?" DarkMoss begged.
"I'm leaving the clan." DarkMoss was surprised by Blazefire's voice.
"What?" Silverpatch, Patch and DarkMoss spoke at the same time.
"I can't take it anymore. Everywhere I look, all I see is dead memories. It's just tearing me apart." Blazefire explained.
"We're coming with him." Fox informed the shocked cats. Sootnose stood at his side.
"Will you be back?" DarkMoss asked. With a sigh, Sootnose answered.
"To visit, but we'll probably never stay."
"Dose Ashstar even know?" Silverpatch asked.

"No, not yet. I didn't want her trying to talk me out of it." Blazefire responded.
"Dose anyone else know?" Patch asked. Blazefire just shook his head.
"I guess this is goodbye. Good luck with the kits, Silverpatch." Blazefire held his head low.
"I'll visit in a moon or so." Sootnose said after a moment of silence.
"Come on guys, let's get going. I have a place in mind, but it's kind of far away."
"Bye DarkMoss, Silverpatch and Patch. I hope StarClan lights your path." Fox nodded in agreement after Sootnose's statement.

With a sigh, DarkMoss wished them well and tried to get them to stay. As DarkMoss had expected, they left shortly after. DarkMoss

quickly finished her vole in silence.
"How about a final hunting patrol?" Patch broke the silence. Large fluffy snowflakes started to come down heavy. Silverpatch looked at the snow, almost looking as though she would say no. After a moment of her debating, she stood up and stretched. Patch was up in a heartbeat and DarkMoss stood up and stretched as well.

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"Dawnpaw, do you promise to uphold the warrior code, even at the cost of your life?" Ashstar called out. It was just the night after Silverpatch had told DarkMoss about her kits, and when Blazefire left the clan.
"Yes." Dawnpaw answered.
"Then from now on, your name will be Dawnwhisker. I hope StarClan lights your path. Clan dismissed." Ashstar jumped off of high rock as the rest of the warriors scattered into groups or headed to their nests. DarkMoss, Patch and Silverpatch has only caught a vole, two mice and nearly had a squirrel. Randomly, they had bumped into the boarder patrol with Aquaspear and Brambletail in it.

"It's going to be boring with out you on patrols." DarkMoss told Silverpatch once they were snuggled up in their nests. Thistle was already asleep, Sootnose's, Fox's and Blazefire's nests where all empty. Brambletail and Aquaspear where talking to each other about something, DarkMoss was too tired to east drop on them though.

"I know, I know. That's why I think you and Thistle need to have kits though! They'd be so cute!" Silverpatch whispered.
"I've probably told you this hundreds of times. I. Don't. Want. Kits."
"Why?" DarkMoss was surprised that she couldn't come up with an answer.
"I just don't want any." She said after a moment.
"Are you *sure?"* Patch added in randomly.
"I thought you were asleep." DarkMoss looked over at the grey tom, his fur looking black, especially where it's a darker grey.
"Let's just go to sleep." Silverpatch nestled down in her nest, covering her face with her tail.
"Yeah, *Patch."* DarkMoss smirked.

"Shut up!" DarkMoss felt someone kick her back. She looked behind her awkwardly. She saw the faint pattern of Aquaspear's white and grey pelt.

DarkMoss stirred from her sleep. Someone had gotten up and nearly tripled over her. She saw the moon-lit clearing and a cat outline went by DarkMoss. The ever so familiar scent of Thistle wafted around her. She was curious on where he was going, but it could wait until the morning.

Chapter 19

DarkMoss jumped up onto her feet. Panic flooded through her. Someone was yelling in the warrior's den, trying to get cats to get up. Patch looked up sleepily then jumped up after he realized something was happening.
"Keep Silverpatch here. Whatever is going on, she doesn't need to be apart of it. He carefully woke her up and told her just to stay in her nest.
"Aquaspear, Brambletail get up, something is happening." DarkMoss woke them up quickly. She ran out into the moon lit clearing. Three large, fuzzy creatures where being fought off by all of BirchClan. After trying to smell around the scent of blood, she caught one of the most recognizable scents. Raccoon. One by it's self isn't too big of a deal, normally five or so warriors could chase it off. But three could be deadly. DarkMoss charged in to the swarm of cats. She saw one of the raccoons stand up on its hind legs. DarkMoss bunched herself up and leapt for it's shoulder, throwing it off balance. DarkMoss was thrown into the frozen earth. She got up as quickly as she could. She raced over and started to bite the raccoon's neck. Blood filled her mouth, which only made her bite harder. She heard the grey and black raccoon squall. It jumped up, throwing DarkMoss again. DarkMoss struggled to get up, she looked over just in time to see a raccoon bite DarkMoss' shoulder. Pain griped her body, seemingly keeping her moving. She barely felt it's odd paws push against her. DarkMoss scrunched her face as she felt her skin rip from her bones.

She felt the ground underneath her again. The pain that had gripped her body had turned to endless waves of pain. She saw blurred outlines of cats fighting the raccoons. After getting her breath back she struggled to her paws. The clearing became clear after a moment. She trotted quickly to a smaller raccoon, which was more of a brown color than the other ones.

DarkMoss lunged at the raccoon, aiming for it's leg. She managed to grab ahold of it's thin leg. With as much strength as she could find,

she bit down on the leg, only stoping when heard a snap and tasted blood. She spat out the leg as she heard a cry from the crow food eater. It snapped at Ashstar, Who was fighting along side of DarkMoss, Firelight, Snowpaw, Branchwalker and Moonleaf, a blue-grey She-cat. The raccoon hobbled out of camp, taking down quite a bit of the entrance with it.

The larger of the two fox-hearts was battling the most of BirchClan's warriors. The other one was slowing down, she saw it grab what seemed to be Sapwisker's tail. She heard another squall, the large raccoon had blood dripping from it's pointed face. It bolted out of camp, only stoping to call for the last one. It hurried out of camp when cats started to chase after it. After a few more moments that seemed like moons the last raccoon scurried out of camp.

"Good fight everyone." Ashstar called out. "You've all fought like warriors tonight, even the apprentices. I wish I could make you warriors now, but your still too young." DarkMoss looked at her shoulders, nearly passing out as she saw her skin hanging lose in patches, blood matting all of her dusty brown fur. Pain started to take over again, coming in hard throbs. She started to head to the medicine cat's den, Blacktip had laid out all the herbs in front of her den.

A line of cats where lined up from the den and followed the camp walls to the leader's den, about ten fox-lengths or a quarter of a tree length.
"DarkMoss!" DarkMoss lifted her head slowly, she saw Silverpatch hurrying out of the warrior's den.
"I'm okay." DarkMoss told her. Silverpatch came over and started licking her wounds, causing them to sting.
"How could a stupid raccoon do this much damage?" Silverpatch said between licks. DarkMoss shrugged, she looked around the clearing, a few cats laid motionless in pools of blood.
"Who are the cats in the clearing?" DarkMoss asked.
"It looks like Nettleshine, Dewpelt and Sundapple I think." She said vaguely.
"DarkMoss, your next." Blacktip called out. Pain shot through her legs as she walked, wincing with every step.

"Is it only on your shoulders?" The fluffy black and white medicine

cat asked.
"I think so." Blacktip put what felt like water soaked moss on her back, although it was leaf-bare, it felt good to release some of the heat in her shoulders.
"It's bad, it'll take a while to heal. This might hurt." Blacktip put something on her shoulders. DarkMoss tensed up as it stung, but it felt better after a moment.
"How long until I can continue my warrior dutys?" DarkMoss was afraid of what she would say.
"Probably half a moon, if you don't do anything crazy for a while."
"That's not too bad, I guess." DarkMoss said with a sigh.
"Eat this poppy seed to help you sleep tonight. Have someone help you get the rest of the blood off of you. Let me know if you find any more cuts or bites and see me in the morning so I can redress your wounds." DarkMoss ate the seed and lingered to the warriors den. Blood and light flurries of snow covered the camp flooring.

"How long was I fighting?" DarkMoss wondered aloud between licks. Patch, Brambletail and Aquaspear were already in their nest, they had no bad wounds on them. The worst one was a deep bite on Patch's hunches.
"Not too long, even though it felt like a moon." Silverpatch gave a few more licks before calling it done.
"It felt like only a few heart beats though." DarkMoss stoped and thought for a moment. "I wonder if this will leave a scar?"
"Let's hope not, half your back wouldn't have any hair." Silverpatch told her. DarkMoss looked at her shoulders again, blood stained spider webs where stretched across her shoulders, just about half way down her back. DarkMoss laid her head down on her paws. She looked up as Thistle walked in, a few wounds where on him, but nothing severe.
"Are you okay Thistle?" DarkMoss asked, laying her head down again.
"I'm fine, I'm more concerned about you." Thistle laid down in his nest next to DarkMoss'.
"I'll be fine." DarkMoss closed her eyes, drifting off into sleep before she heard anything else.

Chapter 20

DarkMoss stretched in her nest. It had been about half a moon since the battle with the three raccoons. Her wound was healing nicely as Blacktip had put it. It had a small infection a quarter moon ago, but a concoction of herbs had fixed it in a few days. Nearly every day, Silverpatch's belly seemed to get bigger. Sitting up, DarkMoss looking in Silverpatch's empty nest. She knew it was going to be a long time before she would see her friend in the warrior's den.

DarkMoss walked into the snowy clearing. Patch and Silverpatch where right outside the nursery, sharing tongues. She padded over to the medicine cat den. Blacktip came out right before DarkMoss had got there.
"Is everything okay, DarkMoss?" She asked, she sat down and wrapped her black tail around her paws.
"Yeah, I was just wondering if I could go on a light hunting patrol."
"I think you could. Just don't chase any squirrels into trees. I know you like to do that." Blacktip gave a slight laugh.
"I won't, thank you Blacktip." DarkMoss said as she padded away from the den, heading to the prey pile. Only a small mouse was left. She decided to leave it for another cat. *I've done nothing to help the clan, not hunting or anything. I need to repay them.* DarkMoss thought. She padded out of camp, the entrance had been fix a while ago.

DarkMoss ducked down into a crouch. She lightly placed her paw on the snow, trying not to let it crunch under her weight. A mouse was a fox-length away. It was eating some sort of seed. DarkMoss picked up her tail as she felt it touch the snow. She crept closer, the mouse completely unaware of a cat stalking it. She lightly wiggled her haunches, holding her breath she pushed her paws to the ground. She grabbed the mouse and broke it's neck. Quickly, she scratched up some earth and snow and buried the brown piece of prey. Snow was still falling, harder than before. The snow came quite high on her legs, twice as high as her paws.

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"When did you leave the den?" DarkMoss turned around, Aquaspear was padding up with Brambletail behind her.
"A little bit after sunup. Have you caught anything yet?"
"A squirrel, that's about it." Brambletail explained.
"Let's hunt together." Aquaspear suggested. DarkMoss nodded and followed Brambletail. DarkMoss' breath became a cloud of white fog as she sniffed for any signs of prey.

"Rabbit!" DarkMoss whispered quietly.
"Where?" Brambletail asked. DarkMoss pointed under a small pine tree.
"How about this. DarkMoss will scare the rabbit to Brambletail and I. DarkMoss, you'll only have to catch it if it doubles back. Dose that sound good?" Aquaspear directed.
"That sounds good." Brambletail agreed with DarkMoss. Aquaspear crept up to a side and Brambletail did the same, only on the other side. DarkMoss came up between the two she-cats. With a nod from Aquaspear, DarkMoss dove under the small tree. Claws first she tried to catch it but missed. The rabbit bolted out from underneath the shrub, on Brambletail's side. DarkMoss backed out of the pine tree, looking for the rabbit. Brambletail head her head down doing something, her stance wide. Moments later she lifted her head, a white rabbit dangling from her jaws.
"Good catch! Wait, Aquaspear where is your apprentice?" DarkMoss questioned.
"Thanks!" Brambletail's mew was muffed.
"I let her sleep in today. She worked hard yesterday. When she gets up, If she should clean the elder's and queen's nests."
"Oh. I'm pretty sure the elders will enjoy the rabbit though." DarkMoss replied. Brambletail was digging a hole in the ground for the rabbit. She placed it in the hole and covered it back up.
"Let's head up to the twoleg bridge, hopefully there's some more prey there." Aquaspear suggested. Nodding in agreement, DarkMoss pranced behind Aquaspear, her tail held high.

"I hope none of Silverpatch's kits have the same personality as Patch." DarkMoss said after a moment.
"Why?" Brambletail inquired.
"Have you never been on a patrol with them two? They don't stop fighting!" Aquaspear answered for DarkMoss, who just nodded in

agreement.
"Oh. Let's see if we can get something quick, I'm freezing!" Brambletail complained.

DarkMoss opened her mouth, smelling for any sign of prey. Aquaspear stoped and raised her tail, telling Brambletail and DarkMoss to stop. Ahead of her was a squirrel. With out thinking, DarkMoss hared after it. She got within a fox-length before it darted away. Out of the corner of her eye she saw Aquaspear and Brambletail chasing after her. The squirrel dove under a small gap between a fallen tree and the ground. DarkMoss leaped over the log, landing heavily. A faint pain shot through her shoulders. She pushed harder, but the squirrel ran up a tree.

"Good job, you've lost him!" Aquaspear joked. DarkMoss coughed for a few moments.
"I want to chase him up the tree but Blacktip told me not to."
"You know, what she doesn't know, won't hurt her." Aquaspear walked up to DarkMoss and stared into the tree.
"Yeah, it hurts me and I really don't want a scar from this, too." DarkMoss informed her.
"Let's head back, I'm freezing to death." Brambletail gave a slight shiver.
"Alright, Let's go find our prey." DarkMoss finished off, she ran back in the direction of her mouse.

The snow had changed again, from large flakes to a near sleet. It took a while to get to her mouse, even at a steady pace. Eventually she made it there after what seemed like half a moon. She opened her mouth and tried to find the pice of prey. The snow had covered any scents, so she had to look for the dirt still on top of the snow. It wasn't too hard to find after a moment. She dug up the mouse and grabbed it. It's brown body started to get cold.
Instead of waiting for Aquaspear and Brambletail, DarkMoss decided to meet them at camp. DarkMoss turned around and headed for camp.

Fresh scents of a cat caught DarkMoss' nose about half way to camp. She would've normally have left it alone, but the smells where odd. A strong scent of blood and Branchwalker? Maybe he had killed something, but it didn't smell like prey's blood, but another cat's.

"Branchwalker?" DarkMoss called out. She followed some tracks into a small clearing in between some bushes. DarkMoss' heart seemed to shatter again at the sight. Not because Branchwalker was dead, but because of his murder.

Chapter 21

DarkMoss had no words. Her mouth stayed open in shock, the mouse had fallen into the snow.
"DarkMoss, I can explain." The tabby tom said.
"Your the *murder*, Thistle?" DarkMoss hopes it wasn't true. Thistle hung his head low, giving a slight nod.
"You *killed* Lillypaw?" DarkMoss felt her throat tighten with grief. Even though it had been about three moons or so, she still misses her apprentice.
"Yes."
"DarkMoss! Where are you?" DarkMoss heard Aquaspear call to her.
"Go, just go. We *will* talk later." Thistle looked at DarkMoss, relief filled his eyes. Thistle padded out through the bushes. DarkMoss paced in the small clearing, trying to get rid of Thistle's scent and slightly larger paw prints.
"Brambletail! Aquaspear! Come here!" DarkMoss' voice was choked with what seem to be grief.
"What happened?" Brambletail was the first in the clearing, her brown eyes wide with shock.
"I-I, I don't know. I-I just found him here." *That's not really a lie, at least not entirely. Right?*

DarkMoss knew exactly what had happen.
"Did you see who it was?" Aquaspear asked her.
"N-no, I only got a faint scent of raccoon." *Why am I stumbling so bad?*
"Was Thistle here? I keep getting a faint scent of him." DarkMoss took a deep breath before answering Aquaspear's question.
"I met him before I found Branchwalker. He went hunting though." Aquaspear and Brambletail nodded. "Let's get him back to camp." DarkMoss said after a moment.

"That's odd, he's still warm." DarkMoss quickly came up with an answer for Brambletail.
"Maybe he got attacked he couldn't make it to camp and he just collapsed here." DarkMoss lied. Apparently, it was believable.

Without another question, they dragged his body to camp. Since of DarkMoss' shoulder, she was left to carry the prey.

"I knew it was DarkMoss!" DarkMoss winced as she heard her name in that tone. They had just brought Branchwalker into the clearing. Thistle was no where to be seen. Cats started to flood around them, some grief stricken but most of them where asking questions.
"What's going on?" Ashstar called out, silence was the only thing said among the clan. With a sigh, Ashstar continued, "who brought who in." DarkMoss lead Brambletail and Aquaspear to the leader.
"I'm the one who found him." DarkMoss told her.
"Continue." Ashstar prompted.
"I found him in a small clearing between some bushes by the twoleg bridge. I caught a faint smell of raccoon on him. It's Branchwalker who died." DarkMoss lied. Pain seem to shoot through her heart as she saw Thistle standing over Branchwalker's limp body.
"Anything else?" Ashstar sounded a bit off, as if she truly believed that DarkMoss was the murder. *I can end this now, but Thistle needs a chance to explain himself.*
"No, after that I called for Brambletail and Aquaspear." DarkMoss told her. With a nod from Ashstar, DarkMoss was dismissed.

DarkMoss walked over into the crowd of cats. Some of them where giving her glares. Thistle had walked into camp, he acted surprised to see the gathered cats. He gave DarkMoss a pleading glance, seeming to want forgiveness. She just looked away. *How could he do that?* Thistle padded over to DarkMoss, his head and ears hung low.
"Do you want to talk now?" Thistle asked.
"Let's go to Fallen Tree." DarkMoss said blandly. DarkMoss weaved her way through the cats that had sounded her, not caring if Thistle was right behind her or not.

She paused at the entrance for Thistle, she saw Silverpatch give her a curious look, her head cocked to the side. She just turned around and headed out of camp, Thistle close behind her.
"I know you won't believe me, but I had no choice." DarkMoss was curious on why he would do such a treacherous thing, but furious because of what he did.
"Well, go on." DarkMoss prompted. They where nearly at Fallen Tree before anyone said a word.

"I was forced to." Thistle told her. She looked away from him, still wanting to know why this seemingly kind-hearted cat could be the killer.
"No one forced you to." DarkMoss replied coldly.
"No, not in BirchClan, in the rouge's clan. My leader made me." DarkMoss glanced at him, pain filled his eyes.
"We could've lived a good life, you didn't have to follow him." DarkMoss told Thistle, breaking him from his thoughts.
"No don't get it, she would've *killed* me. I was scared, and ignorant." Thistle confessed. "I wanted to protect myself, more likely us. I never meant to hurt you though." DarkMoss stoped dead in her tracks, rage pulsing through her like blood.
"You thought *killing* my *apprentice* wouldn't have hurt me? I felt as tho my heart was being ripped from my chest. I was devastated. I'll probably never have another apprentice because everyone thinks I'm the stupid murder!" DarkMoss yelled at him. He looked at DarkMoss with pain, sorrow and fear in his eyes. DarkMoss lashed her claws at his face, causing him to squall. Instant regret hit her hard, wanting to apologize for what she had done.

"That's not the punishment someone like me needs." Thistle told her, blood running down his face. Deep cuts where along his face, blood staining his grey tabby fur. The sun was falling in the sky, an array of colors started to appear.
"I," Thistle gave DarkMoss a pleading glance, DarkMoss looked the other way. "I won't do it again. I will *never* kill another cat, no matter the reason." DarkMoss glanced back at him, her anger slowly going away.
"How can I trust you? I trusted you when I brought you and Fox into the clan, and you betrayed me." DarkMoss' voice was choked with grief.
"DarkMoss-"
"You betrayed my clan." DarkMoss cut him off.
"DarkMoss, please. Give me one more chance." Thistle pleaded. DarkMoss thought for a second. They had sat down in one of the hollow end of Fallen Tree, trying to keep out of the constant snow fall.
"DarkMoss, *please.* I'll do anything to prove it."

Chapter 22

DarkMoss gave the tom another glance, he was looking at her with his dark blue eyes.
"You won't have to do anything. I won't tell anyone. But don't expect me to forgive you." DarkMoss finally said after what seemed like moons of silence. The sun was on the brink of vanishing at any moment, and the nearly full moon would arise.
"Thank you, DarkMoss." Thistle leaned over but DarkMoss scooted away from him.
"Why do you still think I still trust you? You *killed* my clan mates and my *apprentice."* Thistle held his head low while DarkMoss laid down.

"I have one question: why?" DarkMoss asked him. They had been sitting there in awkward silence for what seemed to be many long days.
"I wanted to protect myself and you, so I did what Birch said. Which was to help her take over BirchClan, so she could have more cats to lead." Thistle explained to her.
"You didn't have to listen though."
"I did. She would've found out and killed me any anyone she found out that I loved."
"Was Fox apart of this at all?" Questions had been bouncing around in DarkMoss' brain since that morning of Branchwalker's death.
"Yes, Birch has sent him with me to help or to send reports back. Thankfully, he found Sootnose and forgot about everything. He was apart of one death though."
"Who's was it." DarkMoss had a hint of sorrow in her voice.
"Stormclaw's. We knew she was a very smart cat, so it took the both of us to lure her away from her hunting patrol." Thistle admitted.

"Why didn't you tell me sooner?"
"I knew you weren't going to be happy about it, and I thought you would have me exiled." A light shiver kept DarkMoss from drifting off into sleep. She had forgotten that Thistle's fur was shorter and wasn't as thick as DarkMoss'.

"Let's head back to camp. I know you're cold." DarkMoss told him.
"We can stay here if you want, I'm not really cold."
"Nope, come on." DarkMoss stood up and nosed Thistle up to his feet. "Including, the clan would be wondering where we are."

DarkMoss walked into camp, Thistle still shivering. Cats where still gathered around Branchwalker's limp body. Snow covered the backs of the cats still gathered. Most of the cats where in their nest by now. DarkMoss lead the way to the warrior's den. She curled up in her nest, as close to Silverpatch's as she could get. Thistle got in and laid down on the other side. DarkMoss faced away from him, facing toward Patch instead.

***

DarkMoss paced in front of the nursery. A full moon had the clearing brightly lit. It had been a few days from when DarkMoss had figured out Thistle was the murder. Hollowkit, Sapkit and Whitekit where in the elder's den with Finchwing. The orange and black queen had decided to take her kits to the elder's den so Silverpatch could have room to breathe. She was kitting right at that moment. Blacktip and Patch where in the queen's den, the rest of the cats where either still asleep or waiting for Silverpatch.

More snow had fallen, in some drifts it was up to her belly. DarkMoss tried to peer into the den, but she had no luck. DarkMoss tensed as she heard Silverpatch scream again. She was worried for her friend and her kits.
"Five healthy kits!" Blacktip called out as she left the den. DarkMoss pushed her way through the crowd. After a tail flick from Patch, she walked in. Silverpatch was laid on her side, five beautiful kits at her belly.
"Is she doing okay?" DarkMoss whispered to Patch.
"Yep, two she-kits and three toms." Patch pointed to the two she-kits, one was a smaller black and white kit and the other was a pure black kit with white on her nose and on her back leg. The toms where a dark grey with white paws and tail tip, one that looks like Patch and a pure black one with a short tail.
"There so cute. Do they have names yet?"
"Not yet."
"Okay, I'll check in on you guys in the morning. If you need

anything, come get me." DarkMoss told Patch before squeezing her way into camp and into her nest. Sleep didn't manage to find her so she when hunting. She padded out of camp, nodding to Sapwisker, the new deputy, and Emberstream. A cold gust of wind sent a chill to her bones. *Hopefully there's something out that I can catch.* She opened her mouth, a faint scent of squirrel was in the breeze. She followed the scent to the lake, near the large willow tree.

The squirrel was up in a large pine tree, for some reason not in it's nest sleeping. DarkMoss climbed up the tree as quietly as possible. The squirrel had built it's nest in the middle of a branch close to the top of the tree. DarkMoss made her way on the Branch, trying not to scare the squirrel that was sitting next to it, flicking it's tail. The squirrel looked back at DarkMoss, panic going through it's eyes.

DarkMoss darted after the squirrel when it took off to another tree. She leapt after it to a small oak tree, then into the willow. DarkMoss chased it down the tree and down to the ground. It's light body could stand on the snow, other than when it jumped in which it sunk a bit. DarkMoss on the other hand had to jump to gain any sort of speed. Luckily, the squirrel dove into a bush and stayed there. DarkMoss crept up slowly, finding the squirrel close to the edge. She leapt and snapped it's neck. Warm blood filled her cold mouth, blinding her sense of smell with the scent of the squirrel.

DarkMoss padded into the camp with the squirrel in her jaws for Silverpatch and Patch. She headed to the nursery to see Patch, Silverpatch and their kits as well as Finchwing's kits. Patch lifted his head as DarkMoss dropped off the squirrel.
"This is for Silverpatch when she gets up." DarkMoss whispered to her. Patch just lowered his head. DarkMoss took another look at the small kits before heading to her nest, sleep taking her quickly.

Chapter 23

"DarkMoss come on." DarkMoss lifted her head, it was early dawn.
"Finally your up." Patch told her.
"Did Silverpatch like that squirrel?" DarkMoss asked sleepily.
"Yes, and she wants to see you." Patch walked out of the den. It was the morning of Silverpatch's kitting. DarkMoss stood up and stretched each of her legs. The snow outside was a blinding white until DarkMoss' eyes adjusted. DarkMoss padded through the snow and into the nursery.

"Hi Silverpatch! How are you doing?" DarkMoss stood behind the new queen. Silverpatch licked each of her kits in turn.
"Good as I can be I guess. Oh, and thank you for that squirrel."
"Do they have names yet?" DarkMoss was impatient as a kit becoming an apprentice.
"Yep, this is Mosskit," she pointed to the black she-kit. "This is Stormkit," she pointed to the grey tom. "Daisykit, Thunderkit and Lightningkit." She pointed to the black and white she-kit, the tom that looks like Patch and the black tom with the short tail.
"I love them!" DarkMoss sniffed each kit. "You named Mosskit after me, didn't you?"
"Maybe." Silverpatch replied in a mischievous way.
"Anyway, I love those names." DarkMoss told her.

DarkMoss walked out of the nursery after talking to Silverpatch until sunhigh.
"Aquaspear! Come here!" DarkMoss ran over to the blueish grey she-cat.
"What." Aquaspear said half asleep.
"Silverpatch kitted last night!"
"She did? How many?" Aquaspear sounded a little more awake with the amazing news.
"Five healthy kits. Two she-kits and three toms." Aquaspear pushed past DarkMoss and headed to the nursery. DarkMoss headed out of camp and into the snow filled forest. More snow had fallen last night.

She headed to the creek, this time near the water fall. She constantly had her mouth open, trying to find any prey. Within the past moon, the clan had become thin with some cats starting to have boney frames. Many cats have crossed the boarder from chasing prey. DarkMoss' shoulder wound was nearly healed by now, a small scar was the last thing to show from it. DarkMoss opened her mouth slightly, trying to find any scents. Nothing was around her other than faint scents of cats and maybe a fox on the other side of the ravine. DarkMoss approached the waterfall, the temperature had warmed up quite a bit since that morning.

We need that rabbit. DarkMoss thought as she crossed through the creek. For a lack of a better option, DarkMoss padded through the cold water. She hoped that the chase with the rabbit will warm her back up. Once she was across the creek she looked for the two rabbits again. One was solid white while the other still had a brown patch on it's ear. Luckily, the rabbits couldn't smell her, but she couldn't smell them. She headed to the nearest rabbit, the one with the brown on it's ear. It was slowly heading towards its friend.

DarkMoss was new within a fox-length from the rabbit. DarkMoss lunged after it. She landed onto it's back, claws unsheathed. Instead of trying to escape, it fought back. DarkMoss was about to bite behind it's neck, but the strong smell of cat made her stop. She jumped off as soon as the cat's claws came in contact with DarkMoss' side.
"Stop!" DarkMoss told the cat. The white cat stoped, fur bristled.
"DarkMoss?" DarkMoss recognized the white cat that had a dark grey spot on her nose.
"Sootnose!" DarkMoss was surprised to see her again. Sootnose had left the clan about a moon ago.
"What are you doing out of BirchClan territory?" She asked DarkMoss.
"I thought you where a rabbit, and the clan could use any piece of prey now." DarkMoss explained.
"Oh, how's Silverpatch doing, she should be due any day now."
"That 'any day' was last night."
"Really? How are they?" Sootnose asked.
"Five of them, Silverpatch is doing great as well as her kits."
"What's their names?"

"Mosskit, Lightingkit, Thunderkit, Daisykit And Stormkit."

"Did you get the rabbit?" DarkMoss recognized Blazefire's voice being carried in the wind. DarkMoss looked over in the direction of the rabbit, it was still there, just a few tail lengths further.
"No, but something better caught me!" Sootnose called to Blazefire.
"Caught you?" DarkMoss saw him bound over the deep snow, his bright orange tabby fur sticking out from his white surroundings. DarkMoss ducked down into the snow. Blazefire looked around as he came closer to Sootnose.
"Who was with you?" Blazefire barely finished what he was saying before DarkMoss leapt at him, throwing him into the snow.
"I caught you too!" DarkMoss stood on his chest, keeping him down.
"DarkMoss?"
"That's me." DarkMoss got off of the tom, letting him stand up.
"What are you doing here?"
"Hunting Sootnose apparently." DarkMoss told him.
"She thought I was a rabbit." Sootnose explained.
"You look nothing like a rabbit."

"DarkMoss, do you want me to help you catch that rabbit?" Sootnose asked.
"If you guys don't need it." DarkMoss answered.
"I'm guessing this was a bad winter for BirchClan?" DarkMoss nodded.
"Especially with eight kits running around."
"Eight? I though there was only three."
"There *was* three, Blazefire. Now there's Silverpatch's five." DarkMoss added.
"I didn't know Silverpatch was expecting."
"Are we going to catch that rabbit or not?" Sootnose broke into the conversation.
"Yeah, let's go." DarkMoss responded.

Sootnose had came up with a good plan. DarkMoss was going to spook the rabbit to Sootnose and Blazefire. DarkMoss had rolled in snow, trying to drown out her brown fur against the white sea of snow. DarkMoss got into her position, she readied a bolt that was heading to the rabbit. She saw Blazefire flick his tail, telling DarkMoss that they're ready. DarkMoss bolted. The rabbit jumped

up and ran away from the lake, completely missing the waiting Sootnose and Blazefire. The three cats closed in on the rabbit, Sootnose being the closest, Blazefire and DarkMoss shoulder to shoulder.

The rabbit turned, causing Blazefire to hit DarkMoss. She tumbled in the snow. DarkMoss felt the ground vanish from underneath of her. She flailed, managing to land on her feet. Dizzily, DarkMoss looked around. She had dropped about two and a half fox-lengths. The walls of the small cavern where pushed back, just enough where DarkMoss could climb out.

Chapter 24

"Help!" DarkMoss called out. She had been stuck in the small cavern for a little while, Sootnose and Blazefire couldn't seemed to find her.
"DarkMoss!" She faintly heard Sootnose's call.
"Sootnose!" DarkMoss called again. DarkMoss scrunched up her body, and tried to leap out of the hole. Her paw just barely touched the long, dead grass that was hanging down.
She heard the two cats running around her.
"Sootnose! Blazefire!" DarkMoss hoped that one of them would hear her.
"DarkMoss?" DarkMoss heard Blazefire say her name.
"Blazefire!" Right as DarkMoss said his name, she saw Sootnose's face peer over the hole.
"Can I have some help?" DarkMoss asked. Sootnose just shook her head and called over Blazefire.

"Can you jump out?" Sootnose asked.
"I've tried that, it doesn't work. I need a stick or something to grab onto." DarkMoss told them. They both ran off for a while. Bored, DarkMoss tried to 'run' up the wall, it nearly worked but she ended up knocking the wind out of her. After trying agin, Sootnose and Blazefire came back with a large stick. They laid it over the opening, and tested it to see if it would hold.

DarkMoss got a running start, and leapt up. She managed to grab onto the stick. She felt it bend under her weight. She quickly pulled herself up onto the stick and walked across to the ground.
"Thanks." DarkMoss told them, thankfully, one of them managed to catch the rabbit.
"Let's go." Sootnose said, picking up the rabbit and heading to the creek.
"I guess you want to see Silverpatch's kits." DarkMoss guessed. Her only reply was a nod. "Are you coming with us Blazefire?"
"Na, I think I'm good." He padded up to the tree line, where the ravine should be or at least end at.

"Want to race?" DarkMoss challenged. DarkMoss reached over and grabbed the rabbit, she started to half hop half run to the creek. Sootnose started to get in front of her. DarkMoss pushed herself harder, catching up to the young warrior. Sootnose leaped over the creek, landing on the other side. DarkMoss began to leap, tripping over the rabbit. She flipped into the cold water, landing on her back. The cold water soaked her fur within a heartbeat.

DarkMoss stood up, shaking. Sootnose grabbed the rabbit before it slid down the waterfall. DarkMoss wadded out of the water, her teeth chattering. She started to head back to camp, needing to dry off. Shivering, she picked up the pace. Sootnose caught up quickly, holding the soaked rabbit. DarkMoss started to slow down her bones ached as another cold wind seemed to cut right through her. "DarkMoss?" Sootnose dropped the rabbit. DarkMoss tried to push herself forward, only managing a few more steps. Everywhere around her turned from a white to black. She collapsed onto the snow, which almost felt warm.

DarkMoss woke up, it was still dark outside. Slowly, her eyes adjusted to the dark. She realized that two cats where next to her. DarkMoss felt like she was freezing, but she could nearly feel a blanket of heat around her skin. DarkMoss tried to get up, she tripped on something and landed on another cat.
"DarkMoss, just lay back down, you need some rest." DarkMoss recognized Thistle's voice. She merely slid off of the tabby and back down into her nest. She curled up, shivering again. DarkMoss jumped as she felt Thistle's warm nose on her back.
"You've got a fever, I'll get Blacktip." Thistle got up, and headed out of the warriors den. She tried to figure out who was next to her. It looked like either Aquaspear or Patch. DarkMoss watched as Aquaspear's head flipped around, looking behind her back with bright orange eyes.
"Well good morning." She said.
"How long was I asleep?" DarkMoss asked, she didn't remember going to her nest, the last thing she remembered was passing out near the creek.
"They brought you in a bit after sunhigh, and it should be about morning, so quite a while." Aquaspear said while adjusting herself so she could talk a bit easier. Thistle came in with Blacktip, who

had a small bundle of leaves. She sat them down in front of DarkMoss. Blacktip told her what everything was while DarkMoss ate them, not really listening to Blacktip.
"...don't leave your nest for a while, you still need to warm up." Was all that DarkMoss heard before Blacktip before she walked out of the warriors den.

DarkMoss curled up. Aquaspear had already fell asleep and Thistle walked out of the den. DarkMoss woke back up, Thistle was back in their nest. The was starting to rise, putting a reddish glow to everything outside.
"What's wrong?" DarkMoss almost immediately realized that something was up.
"Nutmeg has had her kits, but she's very sick. Sunfish told me that she might not live to the next quarter moon."
"If she doesn't survive, we'll bring the kits to the clan." Thistle's mood seemed to lighten up a bit.
"You don't know how much that means to me."
"I hope you know that I still don't forgive you yet. I'll never forget what you've done." DarkMoss laid her head on her paws again. She looked at the entrance, wanting to go back outside.
"I don't blame you, I wouldn't trust myself either." He admitted.

Author's notes:
This is completely random, but I kind of want to here any ships or ideas anyone has yet. My favorite ship is probably Patchpatch (Silverpatch and Patch) So let me know in the comments your ship ideas or what you think might happen...that excludes the few people that actually know. And finally, thank you for helping me reach nearly four hundred reads. I squealed when I saw that. KIWI, OUT! (Why am I an idiot?)

Chapter 25

"I'm going to get you DarkMoss!" Hollowkit declared. The orange tabby tom ran up to DarkMoss, batting at her muzzle. DarkMoss stood up, Whitekit and Sapkit was on her back. DarkMoss started to prance around camp, trying to throw them off. One of the kits fell of her back and bit her tail.
"I got you!" Whitekit mumbled through DarkMoss' tail. DarkMoss saw a smooth stone in front of her. She lunged up at it, hitting it with her paw so it skidded across the clearing. Sapkit jumped off her back, chasing after the stone.
"Look it's a mouse!" Whitekit and Hollowkit chases after their Littermate's call. The clearing was packed with snow, making the stone go The the entrance on the other side of camp. DarkMoss shook out her ruffed fur before padding over to the kits. The stone came back at DarkMoss, kits where following behind it. DarkMoss hit the stone again, sending into the leader's den. Whitkit, Sapkit and Hollowkit changed directions. They slid on the slick surface, their claws unsheathed trying to get some grip. Ashstar stretched outside of her den, watching as the stone slid into her den. The three kits stoped what they was doing as Ashstar walked into her den. The red and white tom stopped and looked at DarkMoss, almost seeming like he was planning an attack.
"Don't even think about it Whitekit." DarkMoss told him. She gave a small smile as the kit watched a stone slid out from underneath his paws. Sapkit and Hollowkit ran into each other, immediately tackling the other kit. After a quick moment of deciding, Whitekit joined in.

"Evening patrols will be DarkMoss, Aquaspear and Snowpaw, Shrubberry, Thistle And Adderclaw, you will go to the willow tree to the two-leg bridge, Adderclaw is in charge. Brambletail, Robinwing, Harefoot, Firelight will take the second patrol, Firelight is in charge. Hunting patrols will be lead by Sageheart, Windborrow and Sorrelleaf. They will pick who will go with them." Sapwisker called out. DarkMoss shooed Finchwing's kits away and joined her patrol.

DarkMoss followed a patrol out of camp, the snow starting to melt a bit. It was a day later from when DarkMoss fell into the creek, and was finally aloud to leave camp. Snowpaw had matured quite a bit since she was a kit. *She's nearly a warrior now*. DarkMoss thought, Snowpaw stood just as tall as Aquaspear. *Only if Lillypaw could be here.* DarkMoss had another wave of grief flood through her. A rainbow on the lake reflected the darkening sky. By the time they would make it back the moon would be a quarter of the way in the sky. A faint scent of fox trailed next to them. Based on the little chatter, DarkMoss let her mind wonder.

"Adderclaw, I smell fox over here. It's fresh too."
"I thought I smelled fox. Can you and Brambletail track it, meet us back at camp before dusk if you can." The red tabby tom replied. DarkMoss played the scene over in her head. It had been nearly three seasons since DarkMoss had wrenched her shoulder. The patrol pasted by the lake, going over to great oak. DarkMoss looked off into the thinking forest beyond their territory.
"Now how can a fox climb a tree?" DarkMoss gave a silent laugh at Brambletail's odd response. She had looked around confused when the fox trail had somehow disappeared. *Sootnose was just an apprentice at that time.*

"Now, crouch. Good, now creep up slowly." DarkMoss watched her apprentice stalk up to a mouse. She was about a tail-length away from it when she stoped. She lightly wigged her haunches, holding her tail slightly above the ground. Lillypaw kept a good position, then leapt. She reached down and bit behind it's neck. Proudly, Lillypaw looked back at DarkMoss, the limp mouse hanging in her mouth.
"Good job, Lillypaw!" DarkMoss praised her apprentice, it was her first piece that she caught. DarkMoss noticed Lillypaw's glaze drifted from DarkMoss to something behind her, then back to DarkMoss. Something seemed to crush her shoulder, pinning her to the ground. She struggled to look behind her. A glimpse of grey fur was all she got. Almost immediately knowing who it was, DarkMoss twisted in the dirt, getting her paws under Patch's belly.

"DarkMoss. *DarrrrrkMoss*!" Aquaspear brought DarkMoss out of her thoughts. "DarkMoss! DarkMoss? DarrrrrrrrrrrkMosssssssss!"
"What!" DarkMoss jokingly snapped at the dark Blueish-grey she-

cat.
"Hi!" Aquaspear ran up to the rest of the patrol, which was ahead of the two she-cats. DarkMoss bolted to her.

"You mouse brain!" DarkMoss called to her friend.
"No I'm not!"
"DarkMoss, Aquaspear, quit acting like kits please." DarkMoss halted at Adderclaw's demand.
"Aww, But we where having fun!" Aquaspear demanded.
"Fun doesn't keep predators out of our territory." DarkMoss was surprised at Adderclaw's stern tone.
"No rouge doesn't walk into BirchClan's territory without some cat knowing." DarkMoss defended.
"Yet six murders can happen and know one knows who dose it." DarkMoss looked at Thistle. He quickly looked away. DarkMoss gave a slight sigh in response.
"I'm sure whatever their plan or deal was is over with. It's been a little over a quarter moon since Branchwalker had died." DarkMoss told him. The sky started to darken, they was about half way to the ravine.

"Take it easy Adderclaw." Shrubberry padded up to the reddish-brown tom.
"I smell a squirrel." Snowpaw answered instead of Adderclaw.
"Well go catch it then." Aquaspear told her apprentice. Snowpaw slowly crept up to an oak tree, the rest of the patrol stood still, trying not to scare the grey squirrel further up the tree. Snowpaw started to climb up the tree, quieter than any cat DarkMoss has ever heard. Without the squirrel even knowing, Snowpaw managed to make her way onto the same branch as the squirrel. DarkMoss watched as the white apprentice crouched down, as if she was hunting a mouse on the ground. Snowpaw darted forward, grabbing the squirrel before it realized there was a cat stalking it. She quickly killed it with a swift bite to the neck.

"What are you doing on BirchClan territory?" Adderclaw hissed at the red and cream tom.
"Adderclaw, he's fine. It's just Sunfish." Thistle stood between the raging tom and Sunfish.
Sunfish was sitting towards BirchClan's end of the two-leg bridge.

"Nutmeg's gone, and Birch is threatening to kill her kits. Can you take them?" Sunfish said a bit scared. Thistle looked at Adderclaw, his eyes gleaming with plead.
"I'll ask Ashstar if we can take them in, Thistle and DarkMoss, go get them." Shrubberry answered before Adderclaw.
"Thank you, Shrubberry." Thistle told him before running into the rouge's territory, DarkMoss right on his tail.

Chapter 26

DarkMoss ran further into the unknown territory. She followed Thistle, who was following Sunfish, to what DarkMoss thought to be the rouge's camp.
"How far to the camp." DarkMoss asked.
"It's not really a camp, but it's quite far the last I remember." Thistle answered. DarkMoss pushed ahead, running next to Thistle. Snow started to fall heavily, in large flakes that speckled the night sky. Trees turned from oaks and maple to more of snow covered pine and cedar.

Thankfully, once the trees thicken up a bit, the snow was only deep in patches. The three cats where able to cover ground quicker. They entered a large clearing in the trees, the snow suddenly getting deeper with everything leap. DarkMoss felt something shove hard into her shoulder, throwing her into the snow. She tried to yelp in surprise, but something held her mouth shut.
"*Don't* say a *word.*" A cat hissed at DarkMoss. The tan tabby continued to hold DarkMoss' muzzle into the snow. She shoved it downward until DarkMoss nodded her head.
"How are *you* even *alive?* He said you where *dead*." DarkMoss looked at the She-cat as she snapped at DarkMoss.
"What are you talking about?" DarkMoss quietly asked.
"How did you survive falling into the creek?" The she-cat places a paw on her throat, her claws barely touching DarkMoss' skin, sending chills down her spine.
"I don't know. Why where you there?" DarkMoss asked curiously, yet a bit frantically.
"That's *not* an *answer*." The tan cat pushed down harder on her neck, causing DarkMoss to choke.
"I really don't know! I was unconscious for most of it." DarkMoss started to cough.
"Perhaps I could *kill* you now, but that's not a good way to torture your little friend."
"Who are you talking about?" DarkMoss choked out, only making the she-cat push harder. DarkMoss saw her vision start to turn

black. After what seemed like moons, the tan cat loosened her grip.
"Thistle you mouse-brain!" She snapped at DarkMoss, pushing her muzzle barely a mouse-length away from DarkMoss'.
"He *killed* my kit! Neither of you know how much pain that has brought me! And now I'm getting my revenge, after so long of waiting."

"Now, if you do as I *say*, I won't have to kill you, or petty little *mate*, or your precious little clan of yours."
"Why would I listen to you?" DarkMoss spat at the She-cat.
DarkMoss had been fidgeting her hind legs slowly, trying to get them just right underneath the she-cats belly. Before she could answer, DarkMoss sent the cat flying backwards, into the snow.
"I will do *anything* to protect *my* clan. But I won't take orders from some mangy rouge!" DarkMoss lashed her tail as she watched the tan she-cat.

"Then say 'good bye' to that clan of yours. If I have too, I *will* kill each one of your stupid clan mates while you sit there and watch."
"You *wouldn't dare."* DarkMoss took a challenging step closer to the cat, her amber eyes beaming with curiosity.
"We started off on the wrong foot. Got any kin?" The cat changed the subject, her tone changing quickly.
"Why would it matter to you?" DarkMoss hissed at the cat.
"I seen you with that white cat, Sootnose? I think that's her name. What is she to you?" DarkMoss' fur pricked on her spine.
"No one." DarkMoss lied. Sootnose was her adoptive sister, after her mother, Hollyflower, had died.
"So you have no kin, what so ever?" The she-cat seemed to enjoy this, for some odd reason.
"What about Sageheart? She's your actual littermate, right?"
DarkMoss tried not to change her face. Sageheart was her litter mate, although they went their own ways once their parents had died by a random coyote attack.
"Just another clan mate to me." DarkMoss' voice was a bit shaky, but she forced it to stay steady-ish.
"Oh really now?" The she-cat seemed intrigued by DarkMoss' statement. "Be careful what you ask for!"
"Who are you?" DarkMoss snapped at the tan cat.
"You can call me Birch."

"If I find one trace of your sent on *my* territory I will *rip your throat out*. Don't think I won't hesitate." DarkMoss started to pad in the direction that Sunfish And Thistle had ran off without them.
"Where do you think you're going? I'm not done yet." DarkMoss lashed around, her claws unsheathed. She met Birch with her claws first. She clawed at Birch's muzzle with quickly planed blows, catching her off guard.
"DarkMoss!" A frantic voice called out.
"This is *not over."* Birch whipped away, running away into the near by forest. DarkMoss felt her ear sting, she ran a paw over it, seeing a bit of blood on it.

"Why did you stop?" Thistle came up to DarkMoss, panting.
"Nothing, let's get going." DarkMoss felt Thistle lick her bloody ear.
"Who." Thistle demanded.
"Birch, I think that was her name."
"What did she look like." Thistle asked as they headed towards the kits again.
"A tan tabby, battle scars, torn ears and a short tail, and an attitude like a fox that's half starved and covered in nettles." DarkMoss explained.
"What did you tell her." Thistle's voice seemed to become worried.
"She figured out that Sageheart was my littermate, but hopefully she won't set a foot on our territory." DarkMoss waited a few moments before continuing. "How much further?"
"I don't think it's that much farther, too many tree lengths to count, though."

"Can we start over?" Thistle admitted after a stretch of silence.
"What?" DarkMoss' breath was whipped away by the speeding cats.
"Like nothing ever happened, let these kits be a new start."
"I'm still not forgiving you after what you did." DarkMoss told the tom.
"I'm not asking for forgiveness. You can't ask anyone for that after what I did." Thistle looked away from DarkMoss.
"Then, let's make this a new start. I couldn't imagine my life without you in it, doing whatever you do." Thistle looked at DarkMoss, a smile creeping onto his face.

Chapter 27

DarkMoss looked at the small kits. There was four. A brownish grey tabby tom, a grey tom with faint tabby markings, a grey she-kit, and a calico she-kit. They were definitely small for two day old kits.
"They're too small to hold onto our backs, so we'll have to carry them." DarkMoss told Thistle. Sunfish was laying next to the small kits, trying to warm them up a bit.
"I'll grab two, and you'll grab the other two." Thistle walked over, a bit of pride in his eyes, he grabbed the brown tom and the grey she-kit.
"Thank you Sunfish." DarkMoss grabbed the other two kits. The reddish tom nodded his head and followed them out of the small den. Thistle led the way out of the rouge's scattered camp. Dens where everywhere. A fluffy brown tabby with a collar on sat out side of a den, another cat was poking out from underneath a black hole that was the clearing. Thistle flicked his tail at the tom. The two cats picked up some speed, one of the kits that DarkMoss was holding let out a tiny mew.

"I say about halfway to the twoleg bridge, we stop and let the kits warm up a bit." DarkMoss mumbled through the kit's scruff.
"That would be about where Birch attacked you." DarkMoss heard another kit mew. It was already moon-high.

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DarkMoss saw the faint outline of the camp. The moon would be setting soon. Tiredness tugged at her paws and eyes. She just wanted to get in a nest, warm these kits up and fall asleep.
DarkMoss padded into camp. They was met by Ashstar.
"There's a nest in the nursery waiting for the kits. Patch agreed to make it warm for you." Ashstar told them. "I'll tell the rest of the clan after you get some sleep." DarkMoss nodded to the grey leader.
DarkMoss sat the two kits that she was carrying down next the the nest. She nosed Patch, who was sound asleep in the feather filled nest. He quietly got out of the nest, and woke Silverpatch up.

DarkMoss curled up in the nest, setting the kits next to her. Thistle sat the two he was carrying down next to her. She felt them nuzzle closer to her, she wrapped her tail around them. Sleep taking her quickly dragging into the pleasant darkness.

DarkMoss shifted awake as she felt what seemed to be another kit placed next to her. She lifted her head to see Silverpatch place the grey tabby down next to her.
"They needed to be fed." Silverpatch told her. It was sun high. Cats kept glancing into the den to see if they could see the kits, or to see if Ashstar had allowed a rouge's kits into camp.
"Who's that?" DarkMoss saw Lightningkit trot look over to see the new kits.

"They don't have names yet." DarkMoss told the kit. *Am I going to raise these guys?* DarkMoss didn't have an answer. She knew that she wanted to name them, but did not know if she'd raise them.
"Can we play with them?" Daisykit asked.
"They're too young." Silverpatch touched her kit with the tip of her tail. "What are you going to name them?" Silverpatch continued.

"I don't know, I've been throwing around names but non seem to stick." DarkMoss licked the grey tabby kit.
"Maybe have Thistle help you, They are his kits anyway." As if he was called, Thistle came in with a small vole. He flopped it down next to DarkMoss. Thistle curled laid down next to her.
"I though we could share this vole." Thistle told her.
"Thanks, what should we name them?" DarkMoss pointed at the small bundles of fur.

"Thrushkit?" Thistle pointed to the brownish grey tabby, he had a tan belly, muzzle, paws and a strip following underneath of his tail.
"I like that name for him." Thrushkit let out a tiny mew. "I think he agrees."
"I think so too."
"I thought you guys didn't like each other." Silverpatch added in.
"What?"
"You wouldn't talk to Thistle for the past few sunrises." DarkMoss looked at Thistle, who gave her a slight pleading shine in his blue eyes.

"We had a bad argument." DarkMoss told her. *It's not really a lie, we definitely argued.*
"Oh. I'm glad you got over it though."
"Honeykit and Riverkit?" DarkMoss pointed to the calico she-kit, she was mostly brown, but had a few patches of white and black. DarkMoss then pointed to the grey she-kit, she had darker grey on parts of her pelt, and had white on her muzzle and the tip of her toes.
"How about Creekkit?" Thistle suggested for the grey she-kit.
DarkMoss nodded.

"Now for the last one." Thistle thought out loud.
"Starkit." DarkMoss said, pointing to the last kit. He was a light grey with faint tabby markings. He had a pale tan muzzle, belly, tail tip and paws.
"Odd, but original." Silverpatch added.
"Imagine if he becomes leader. He'll be Starstar." DarkMoss gave a slight laugh as she was speaking.
"So those are the final names? Starkit, Honeykit, Creekkit and Thrushkit?" Thistle asked.
"I'm good with them, are you?" Thistle nodded.
"Hi Starkit, Honeykit, Creekkit and Thistlekit!" Mosskit bounded out of Silverpatch's nest.
"It's Thrushkit." DarkMoss corrected the little black she-kit.

"May all cats old enough to catch their own prey join me under High rock." Ashstar called out.
"I should probably go out. Silverpatch can you watch these guys? I'll catch you up on what Ashstar says.
"I guess." Silverpatch gave a fake sigh.
"Thanks." DarkMoss walked out of the den. The snow was starting to melt, thankfully. DarkMoss sat near the back, next to Thistle.
"Where were you?" DarkMoss heard Aquaspear whisper to her.
"You'll see in just a moment." Aquaspear gave her a confused glance.

"We have four new kits. DarkMoss and Thistle brought them in last night." Ashstar started. "DarkMoss, Thistle, do you mind to explain why?" Ashstar signaled for DarkMoss and Thistle to come up to the front of the clan.

Hey! Stop reading and check out Creamy_Marshmello's new book! She just posted the disclaimer, I think that's what she called it, and The first chapter today! So go follow her and check her book out! And a little random thing: we hit over 400 reads! It might seem odd, but this is amazing to me! I was thinking about scraping this book (before I published the first chapter) like the other ones but something kept me from doing that, and I'm glad I didn't scrap the idea. I never would have thought that in about half a year, my book would have grown so much! Sorry, I'm rambling as always, but have a good day!

Chapter 28

DarkMoss felt her fur prick. Thistle stood up next to her, nudging her forward. Cats moved out of the way, leaving a clear path up to high rock. DarkMoss hated that everyone was staring at her. Their glazes burning holes in her dusty brown pelt. After what seemed like a moon of walking, DarkMoss sat down in front of the clan, Thistle next to her. DarkMoss nudged Thistle, hoping that he would go first.

"Nutmeg, the mother of Thrushkit, Starkit, Creekkit and Honeykit, was my mate. I didn't know she was expecting before I left. After she had the kits, she died, leaving them defenseless against some awful cats that would've killed them." Thistle called out.
"Thankfully, a friend of Thistle's caught us on a boarder patrol and told us before anyone could have hurt them, or just have died from the cold or starvation." DarkMoss added after she got situated with the stares from the clan.
"So you brought in a rouge's kits?" DarkMoss heard Adderclaw call out. Thistle nodded his head.
"Who's going to raise them, Silverpatch can't, that would be too many kits for one cat!" Sageheart questioned.
"I could." DarkMoss said quietly.
"Are you sure DarkMoss?" Ashstar looked down from her spot on high rock. Thistle looked over at her.
"Yeah. I think I am." DarkMoss said louder.
"DarkMoss will raise Thistle's kits. No one will treat them like an outcast because there," Ashstar had to stop to come up with the term. "Halfclan. Anything else?" Ashstar asked.
"So are we supposed to hunt for *five more* cats?" DarkMoss couldn't determine who said it.
"I'm sure DarkMoss won't stop hunting, at least for a while." Ashstar told the cat.
"Clan dismissed." Ashstar called when no one said anything. For some reason DarkMoss remembered that her ear had been slightly torn by Birch. She swipes a paw over her ear, no blood or anything was on it.

"Thistle, who cleaned my ear?" DarkMoss asked the grey tabby tom.
"I think Silverpatch did." He replied.
"Oh, how did I not wake up from it?"
"You stayed *up* all night *running*, so you where wore *out,* it's *obvious*." Patch butted in, the tom has walked up without DarkMoss knowing that he was approaching.
"I should've known you where going to be you." DarkMoss told the grey tom.
"It's been to long since I tormented you." He replied in his usual tone.

"Great." DarkMoss said blandly, yet some how playfully. DarkMoss headed back into the nursery, Patch was following her.
"Hi DarkMoss!" Sapkit squeaked, she looked up from fighting with her brothers.
"Hello Sapkit, Hollowkit and Whitekit." DarkMoss replied to the kits.
"Look out! It's a fox!" Whitekit declared, charging at DarkMoss. After watching the kit scamper towards her, DarkMoss shifted her paw, causing Whitekit to trip.
"Not today, maybe Patch will play with you." DarkMoss looked over at the tom with a small smile.

"Nice one." DarkMoss picked up her pace, leaving Patch with the three kits. She ducked into the den, seeing Silverpatch laying in her nest, DarkMoss' kits laying next to her. Silverpatch's kits fighting in the space around the nest.
"Can I have my kits back?" DarkMoss joked. Silverpatch looked away from her kits and up at DarkMoss.
"But your nest is warm, and mine's not."
"How many kits are in here, 13?" *That's a lot of kits, even without Silverpatch.* Finchwing had her three, Hollowkit, Sapkit and Whitekit. Silverpatch's five, Stormkit, Mosskit, Lightingkit, Thunderkit, And Daisykit. Then DarkMoss' four, Starkit, Honeykit, Thrushkit And Creekkit.

"I'm not a kit, you mouse-brain." Silverpatch carfully got out of the nest, trying not to wake up her kits.
"Sure your not."
"*DarkMoss* is though." Patch walked into the den as soon as

DarkMoss curled around her kits.
"Why's that?" DarkMoss told the tom.
"You *know* why." Patch responded. Finchwing's kits bounded in after him.

"Hollowkit, Sapkit, Whitekit, get out of there. You don't need to be disturbing DarkMoss." Finchwing's tone was stern.
"Finchwing They-" she cut DarkMoss off.
"No, you need to rest." Her tone lightened up a bit. Her kits scampered out of the den, only leaving Silverpatch, Patch, DarkMoss and their kits.

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DarkMoss watched her kits play with some lose balls of moss. It had been a few sunrises since she brought the kits to the clans. Thrushkit's, Starkit's, Honeykit's, and Creekkit's personalizes were already starting to show. Thrushkit was a bit rougher, and more independent while Starkit loved being with his sisters and playing with everyone.
"Can we go outside?" Starkit asked again. DarkMoss hadn't let them out just yet, it had been too muddy from the snow melt. Before answering, she looked outside.
"I guess, don't get in trouble though." DarkMoss followed her kits outside, Silverpatch's and Finchwing's where already outside.

"Whoa! It's so *big* out here!" DarkMoss couldn't help but to give a slight laugh at Starkit's comment.
"This is nothing, out side of camp, only StarClan knows how far it goes." DarkMoss told him. After a moment of him staring at DarkMoss he bounded off to Silverpatch's kits. The rustling of the camp entrance caught DarkMoss' attention. Brambletail walked in first her head low. She looked up at DarkMoss, her gaze was filled with sorrow.

"Get back in the den." DarkMoss told her kits. She knew the look on Brambletail's face wasn't good.
"We just got out here though!" Thrushkit protested, followed by his littermate saying 'yeah!'
"Get back into the nest." Starkit was the first to trot back to the den, his head hung low for a second. "And the rest of you." DarkMoss
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nosed Thrushkit back into the den, stomping as he padded in. Creekkit and Honeykit followed.

"Why'd you make them go back in?" Silverpatch asked.
"Just how Brambletail looked at me, something isn't right." DarkMoss' voice trailed off as she saw Aquaspear, Emberstream, and Shrubberry walked into the den, Dragging Sageheart. Quailpaw came in last, his head low. Grief and anger surged through DarkMoss.

"DarkMoss are you-" DarkMoss didn't hear the rest of Silverpatch was going to say, she *had* to find Thistle. *Why did I forgive that stupid little trader? I shouldn't have listened to him.* DarkMoss headed to the waterfall, where Thistle would be hunting.

Chapter 29

"Thistle How could you! I *trusted* you! And this is how you repay me? After what *you* did!" DarkMoss yelled at the grey tabby, making him jump.
"What are you talking about?" He asked, looking at DarkMoss confused. *I'm not falling for any of your fox-dung anymore!*
"You *know* what you did!" Thistle continued to look at her confused.
"You *killed* Sageheart!" DarkMoss snapped at the tom, putting her muzzle in his face.
"I-i-" DarkMoss cut him off.
"Let me guess, you can explain why you had to kill her."
"I *didn't* know she was dead." Thistle's voice was a bit shaky.

"Oh sure! Like you didn't know how *killing my apprentice* wouldn't have hurt me? I'm probably never going to be able to have an apprentice because of you!"
"I truly didn't kill her!"
"Sure! Well don't come near me, or *my* kits ever again!"
"They're not even your kits to begin with!" Thistle fought back.
"Is this really how you wanted to 'start over?' To *kill* my littermate? The last piece of my family?" DarkMoss stoped yelling, grief griped her throat.
"I *didn't* kill her." Thistle said lightly, his eyes begging for forgiveness.
"Then who did? Aquaspear? Ashstar? If *you* didn't, then who did?" DarkMoss yelled for a moment, calming back down after a few heart beats.

"I don't know, I didn't even know she was dead." Thistle flinched after his first phrase, probably expecting DarkMoss to snap at him again.
"How do I not know your lying? Like you have before?" DarkMoss turned away from him. "We're nothing anymore. Not friends or mates. Not even clan mates. To me, your just some mangy rouge that Ashstar let in."
"DarkMoss plea-"

"Stay away from me and my kits, and if you hurt a single whisker on one of them, you *won't* see the light of day *ever* again." DarkMoss bolted back to camp. Sorrow filled her as she busted into the entrance. Silverpatch was next to Sageheart. She slowed down and shoved her muzzle into her sister's darker brown fur.

"DarkMoss, get up." A paw nudged her shoulder, causing her to stir wake. She lifted her muzzle out of Sageheart's fur. Silverpatch looked at her, sorrow shining in her eyes.
"Come back to your nest, your kits miss you." Silverpatch told her. It was about moon-high. She had came in about a quarter of a day before dark.
"What's wrong DarkMoss?" Starkit met her at the entrance to the queen's den, his mood joyful as always.

"Nothing for you to be worried about." DarkMoss tried to lighten up her tone a bit, succeeding at least a bit. DarkMoss laid down in her nest. Starkit shoving his way under DarkMoss' neck.
"Are you sure?" He asked.
"Yeah, But you should be asleep by now." DarkMoss told her kit.

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DarkMoss threw the last pawful of dirt over her sister, lightly patting it down. She had joined Shadebrezze and Smokefoot buried her littlermate.
"I know it's rough dear, but you'll see her again." Shadebrezze comforted her.
"I know."
"She'll be watching over you, your new kits and your mate from StarClan."
"Not exactly my mate anymore." DarkMoss' voice was broken, getting quieter with every word.
"Let's get back before I freeze my tail off!" Smokefoot complained.
DarkMoss followed behind the two elders. East dropping on their conversation.

"Where did she go?" Starkit asked, curiosity shining in his eyes.
"Who?" DarkMoss met the grey kit in the middle of the clearing, his siblings play-fighting.
"That brown She-cat."

"She's gone."
"Like she won't come back, forever?"
"Yes, forever." Grief struck her throat, he was talking about Sageheart, he must have seen them take her body out of camp.
"Will we see her again?"
"In StarClan we will." DarkMoss whispered quietly. "How about you play with your Littermates."

"Can you play with us too?" He asked.
"How about, I show you how to do a hunter's crouch?" DarkMoss suggested.
"Yeah! Honeykit, Thrushkit, Creekkit! DarkMoss is going to show us a hunter's crouch!" He broke up the fighting, Thrushkit was the first over, followed by Creekkit and lastly Honeykit. DarkMoss waited for her kits to get settled a little bit.
"Alright, this is what you need to do." DarkMoss easily put herself into a crouch. She couldn't help but to suppress a laugh as Creekkit fell over.
"Creekkit, you need to evenly balance yourself."
"Like this?" Creekkit tried again, far from being perfect, but better than falling over.
"Yep, that's a bit better." DarkMoss told her kit. She started to stalk forward. Starkit was the first to mock her, nearly falling over every step.

"Can we learn too?" Lightningkit pleaded. A tiny white spot was on her head. *I must have just missed it.*
"Of corse." DarkMoss told Silverpatch's kits. All of her kits crouched down, Mosskit having a pretty good stance for a quarter moon old kit.
"Like this?" Lightingkit asked.
"Move you back foot forward a little, good!" DarkMoss told the kit, his eyes bright with joy.

Chapter 30

"May all cats old enough to catch their own prey, join us under high rock for a clan meeting!" Ashstar called out. It was the next day. The two apprentices where the first in the clearing. The rest of the clan started to swarm around them. DarkMoss sat outside of the nursery, her kits sitting next to her. Silverpatch sat down next to Starkit. Finchwing had decided to stay in the den, but her three kits where out watching.
"We have two new warriors that need their names. Snowpaw and Quailpaw." The leader told her clan. Snowpaw's pelt lightly prick when her name was called.
"Quailpaw. You have shown courage and strength with your training. You will be an amazing warrior with time and patience, your warrior name is Quailfeather." All of BirchClan's warriors cheered the tom's new name.
"Snowpaw, you have shown great loyalty and empathy with your training. Your new name will be Snowfall." The clan cheered the white warrior's new name.
"You will sit vigil tonight. We will not be without apprentices for long, within two moons, we will have 3 new apprentices." DarkMoss glanced over at Whitekit, Sapkit and Hollowkit, they looked at each other with a bit of confusion, with quickly turned to excitement.
"Clan dismissed."

"Where did Thistle go?" Thrushkit asked. Thistle had disappeared after their argument. She wanted to be worried but she kept telling herself why should she care about a Fox-heart like that?
"He, went a way." DarkMoss made up real quick. Silverpatch looked over question beaming in her eyes.
"Will he come back?" Starkit added in.
"I-I don't know. Now go play guys, but don't get under any cat's paws." DarkMoss told them, Silverpatch let her kits play too.
"What happened?" Silverpatch asked.
"We got into a bad argument. We can't be friends anymore." DarkMoss told her, looking down at the frozen ground with a bit of frost.

"Are you still mates?" Silverpatch asked.
"No, where not even clan-mates." DarkMoss felt anger rise in her, but she managed to push it back.

"How can you not be clan-mates?"
"It's not the time or place." DarkMoss answered after a moment of thinking.
"How bad could it be?" Silverpatch inquired.
"I'll tell you when I'm ready." DarkMoss nearly snapped.
"Do you want to hunt for a bit, to get things off your mind?" Silverpatch said after a sigh.
"Will you watch my kits?" Silverpatch nodded. DarkMoss got up and stretched. She headed to the entrance, trying to pass by her kits without them realizing that she was leaving.

"Where are you going?" Honeykit asked quietly.
"I'll be back in a bit, listen to what Silverpatch says, okay?" DarkMoss told the small calico kit.
"Okay!" She bounded back to her littermates. DarkMoss quickly slipped out of camp before anyone else asked. DarkMoss headed to the willow tree near the lake, hopping to stumble on a squirrel.

DarkMoss slightly opened her mouth once she got to the willow tree. She caught a faint whiff of a mouse, then one of a rabbit. She followed where the sent lead, creeping over rocks and frozen moss near the lake. The trail led to Fallen Tree. She looked ahead, seeing the grey rabbit hop near the tree, unaware of a cat stalking it. DarkMoss took a silent, deep breath before creeping closer. Somehow she made some leaves crackle, causing the rabbit to dart. DarkMoss hared after it, heading up to the waterfall.

DarkMoss managed to catch up with it about half way to the ravine. She swiped her paw at it's back legs, her paw caught it's leg, making it fall. She quickly jumped up onto the squirming rabbit, struggling to bite it's neck. It let out a squall as DarkMoss managed to get a killing bite. She stepped off of the rabbit once it quit moving, only then realizing that it was quite small, only enough to feed three cats with a decent amount. She grabbed the rabbit, throwing it back down when it gave another kick. DarkMoss decided to head back after not catching something after a long while of waiting.

It nearly didn't feel right, not seeing Thistle when she walked in, and without knowing where he was. As soon as she stepped foot into the clearing, her kits was at her side or underneath of her.
"Did you catch that?" Creekkit asked, her eyes wide. DarkMoss nodded, knowing that it would be useless to try and talk through it's thick fur. It was nearly nightfall. DarkMoss had hunted through out most of the day, the warrior ceremony was at sun-high. She placed the prey on the small prey pile. She grabbed a small vole near the bottom and headed to the nursery.

"Thanks, Silverpatch." DarkMoss told the grey and white queen when she stepped in. Silverpatch just purred lightly in response, happy that DarkMoss had lighten up. "Did they behave?"
"Yeah, other than someone wanted to follow a patrol out of camp." Silverpatch looked at Thrushkit, who avoided DarkMoss' glare.
"Starkit made me do it!" Starkit looked over at the tan tabby tom before looking at DarkMoss confused.
"I didn't do anything!" He protested.
"Thrushkit, don't do that again." DarkMoss told the kit while she laid down in her nest. Her kits at her belly.
"I won't." He hung his head low.
"Now lets get some sleep." DarkMoss let out a long yawn, causing nearly everyone to yawn in response.

"DarkMoss get up!" DarkMoss snapped awake. Silverpatch was frantically shoving her shoulder.
"What's wrong!?" DarkMoss jumped up, looking at her kits. *Creekkit is missing!*
"Daisykit is missing too." Silverpatch looked worried.
"Who else knows?"
"Most of the clan is looking for them, mostly around the lake."
"Please watch them, I think I know where to go." Silverpatch nodded. DarkMoss scampered out of camp, a thick layer of snow had fallen that night. Large flakes where falling heavily. *He's going to pay for this!* DarkMoss thought, pushing herself harder as she headed to the twoleg bridge.

DarkMoss opened her mouth, smelling Thistle, Daisykit and Creekkit and maybe another scent that DarkMoss didn't know. She approached the bridge, for once thankful for seeing Thistle's grey

tabby coat. He saw the black and white figure of Daisykit in the snow, a bit of what looked to be blood surrounded her. Creekkit was in front of her, violently shivering. She ran up to her wet kit. Grabbing Creekkit, she placed her on her flank, quickly licking her grey fur vigorously, trying to warm her up.

"DarkMoss I'm cold." Creekkit had laid down, her eyes drifting from open to closed.
"No, stay awake! Creekkit stay awake! Please!" DarkMoss' tone started to sink as Creekkit's flank slowed, eventually stoping.
"Creekkit, no." DarkMoss pushed her nose into her kit's fur, grief striking her hard.

"You *killed* her." DarkMoss looked up at Thistle, his gaze was dark with what seemed to be sorrow and confusion.
"I didn't." DarkMoss could barely make out what he was saying
"*What* was that?" DarkMoss snapped, she carefully placed her dead kit in the snow.
"I didn't kill them." Thistle backed up as DarkMoss drew nearer.
"Then who did!"
"Birch did!" Thistle yelled back. Rage surged beneath DarkMoss' pelt.
"How did she know where my camp was then? How did she know where Silverpatch's and my kits where? She couldn't have done it without your help!" DarkMoss slashed his face, drawing blood from his skin.

"She threaten to kill me, your entire clan and you! I tried to protect you!" DarkMoss didn't believe his lies.
"How do I not know that you're lying? How do I not know that you're not helping her take over my clan?" DarkMoss pushed the tom closer to the ravine. A thick fog overflowed from it's depths.

"I didn't kill Sageheart, Daisykit or Creekkit! I don't know who did!"
"But *you* killed my apprentice, Coontail, Branchwalker, Crystalpelt, Pineclaw, Stormclaw, and whoever else!" DarkMoss threw another slash at his face, her claw nearly hitting his eye.
"I told you I did! And I regret everything! But *please* just trust me, I didn't kill them! Birch must've."
"Oh blame it on Birch!" DarkMoss took another step closer, pushing him to the edge of the ravine.

"I didn't do it! Please belie-" before Thistle could finish, DarkMoss lunged forward, causing him to jump back. DarkMoss gasped as she saw him plummet into the fog, shock filled his eyes.

"Thistle." DarkMoss whispered.
"Thanks for doing my dirty work for me." DarkMoss whipped around, seeing the battered tan tabby she-cat.
"Birch, why are you here?" DarkMoss' fur bristled as she looked at Birch, who was sitting on the twoleg bridge, licking her paw.
"I made Thistle pay for the *pain* he has brought me, and you helped." Birch told DarkMoss as if nothing had happened. "I killed Sageheart, and that kit of your friend's. The cold got your kit."
DarkMoss lunged at the cat, careful not to fall of the bridge. She pinned the tan cat down, clawing at her like a rouge. Birch threw a successful blow to DarkMoss' face, blood poured into her one eye.

"You made me *kill* my own friend! You made him do this to me! And my clan!" DarkMoss said in between blows, one hitting her neck. The she-cat snarled, she twisted to her feet, heading to the rouge's territory.
"Don't think this is the last you'll see of me!" Birch yelled before disappearing into the trees. DarkMoss stood there panting, blinking to get some of the blood out of her eye,

She quietly turned back, looking at the kits that was murdered for no reason. DarkMoss gave a slight glance at the ravine, she had just killed a cat for something he didn't do. DarkMoss carefully picked up the two kits and headed back to camp.

"Silverpatch, I found your kit." DarkMoss said, sorrow griped her voice. Silverpatch quickly got up, telling her kits to stay in their nest. DarkMoss' kits where thankfully asleep. DarkMoss lead Silverpatch into the snow covered clearing, a blood curdling scream was all that she could say when she saw Daisykit and Creekkit.
"I'm so sorry." DarkMoss told her friend, sitting next to her.

Author notes and a prequel of a squeal?

Sorry to leave it at such a bad spot...but I had no clue how to end it. But if you've read this far to see this, I want to say thanks. Thanks for reading past some badly written chapters and so many typos. I hope you enjoyed this book, and would stick around for book two, I guess you'd call it. The book most takes place a few moons before this book did, then finishing off near the end of this book. That would explain the title of this chapter? I'm going to call it that. And it will be Thistle's POV. So if you've ever wondered why Thistle was the way he was, his past or just how he killed all of those cats, keep an eye out for it. It should be called Thistle's Mistake. I don't know when I'm going to publish yet, I only have a few chapters written right now. As always, if you have any questions, suggestions or just thought of something that you'd like to say, let me know! I would love to hear it. I'll respond too it as quick as I can. Well, I'm (as always) rambling, so thank you once again for reading, and sorry for ending it like that. I couldn't think of a better way. Until next time: GOOD BYE! Why does that seem a bit mean? Anyway, bye!